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CONTENTS.

	PAGE		PAGE
EVENTS OF THE WEEK ...	377	LETTERS FROM ABROAD:—	
POLITICS AND AFFAIRS:—		A Milepost for American	
"Peace" ...	380	Labor. By Charles Merz...	389
How the League Will		COMMUNICATIONS:—	
Govern ...	380	Unrest in France. By	
STATE MINES ...	682	Robert Dell ...	390
A LONDON DIARY. By Care-		LETTERS TO THE EDITOR. By	
taker ...	383	W. J. Chamberlain, M.	
LIFE AND LETTERS:—		Bridges Adams, E. J. H.,	
Of Gesture ...	384	and others ...	391
In and Near Selborne ...	385	POETRY:—	
MUSIC:—		Lovers and Ghosts. By	
La Boutique Fantasque. By		Henry King ...	393
Francis Toye ...	386	THE WORLD OF BOOKS. By	
SHORT STUDIES:—		H. J. M. ...	394
In North Wales. By Frede-		REVIEWS:—	
rick Niven ...	387	Mr. Yeats in Prose ...	395
PRESENT-DAY PROBLEMS:—		"1914" ...	396
The "Thirsty-First" in		The Germans in Belgium ...	398
America. By R. ...	388	Mr. Bertrand Russell's	
		Politics ...	400
		"Thou Shalt Not Know." ...	400
		THE WEEK IN THE CITY. By	
		Lucellum ...	402

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Events of the Week.

THE work of dictating peace has come this week to its end, in scenes which will make in history reading as painful as the dealings of Bismarck with Thiers. The Germans have been driven in the end to unconditional acceptance of the Treaty, but it cost them a hurried and agitated crisis before they reached the inevitable decision. The Scheidemann Ministry could not arrive at a unanimous conclusion, and resigned to make way for another. The delegation from Versailles, including the Pacifist Professor Schücking, was against signature. Herr Scheidemann, who had originally favored signature, ended by opposing it. So, of course, did all the Democratic members of the Cabinet, including Count Brockdorff-Rantzau, Herr Dernburg, and Prof. Preuss. This party, which is in personal ability the richest in the Assembly and the Ministry, and bears on the whole a good record for its opposition to Junker-Militarism, was virtually unanimous against signing, doubtless because its members belong mainly to the middle-class, which would not have starved, if food supplies had again been cut off. The decision to sign was imposed by the Catholic Centre (which has multitudes of working-class voters, especially women), and by the Majority Socialists, who saw the Independents gaining ground by their open advocacy of signature. The ablest of the Majority Ministers, Dr. Landsberg, stood aside, but is expected to join the new Ministry shortly. A curious evidence of the solidity of the Centre is the fact that Herr Giesberts, a Trade Unionist leader and one of the Versailles delegates, who had spoken most hotly against signing, in the end changed sides. Without a doubt it is the pressure of the half-starved working-class which has alone enforced signature.

THE new Ministry omits the Democrats and represents only the two biggest parties in the Assembly. A "Red-Black," Socialist-Centre coalition, is a strange phenomenon in German politics, but in truth the Socialist "Majority" is rather a powerful trade unionist

machine, very wooden but well organized, than a living Socialist party. Herr Bauer, an aged trade union official, is Premier by seniority. The leading journalists in the Ministry are the Left-Centre leader Erzberger, and the Socialist Hermann Müller. The latter was Secretary of the party, a popular, amiable personality with a frank and straight-forward manner, but his experience, though he was a familiar figure at International Congresses, hardly fits him for the post of Foreign Secretary. Herr Noske is still at the War Office, and his record as the patron and creator of the Free Corps which have repressed the Communist movement with so much brutality, will suffice to ensure to the new Government the hearty hostility of the whole Left, including the growing opposition within the Majority itself. Herr Erzberger as its artist in the management of public opinion, Herr Noske as the drill-sergeant of the Pretorian Guard, and Count Bernsdorff behind the scenes in control of foreign policy, are the real heads of this combination. It marks no new phase in German evolution and can be only a makeshift. It will do well if it lasts till autumn, when a new General Election under the new Constitution may be held.

HERR BAUER, at the head of the new Ministry, met the Assembly on Sunday. His speech was a simple cry of distress and helplessness. Its central passage was the argument that even if Germany should to-day say "no" to the Treaty, rejection would not avert it in the end. He made the most of the Entente's assurance "that the Treaty can be revised from time to time." Subject to the Assembly's assent, the Government would, therefore, sign, but no one could expect that the German people should assent "with inner conviction." It "yields to force," but "undertakes to fulfil the peace conditions imposed on Germany," though they "exceed what Germany can in fact perform." Then followed reserves on two points which touched German honor. They could not truthfully declare that they believed Germany to be the sole author of the war, nor could they agree to surrender German soldiers for trial by enemy courts-martial. The Assembly voted confidence in the new Ministry, and assented to its policy by 236 to 89, with 68 abstentions. The Germans alone in Europe have had the full Treaty before them, and alone in Europe, their Parliament has been consulted before the act of signature.

THE pathetic attempt of the new Ministry to save these two points of honor was instantly thwarted from Paris. M. Clemenceau telegraphed back on Sunday night that the time for discussion had passed and that the Treaty must be accepted or rejected as a whole within twenty-four hours. On Monday afternoon Herr Bauer again met the Assembly, gave it the news, and received its assent, given by the members standing in their places, to unconditional signature. In the interval some of the army chiefs, whether from loyalty to leaders who may be surrendered for trial, or from reluctance to consent to the disbandment of their forces, addressed a protest to the Government against signing. It caused some alarm, and there were rumors of a military *coup d'état*, but the effect was

to cause a general rally of all parties to the Government. It is said that most of the leading generals have since sent in their resignations. The news of Germany's complete surrender reached Paris just within the appointed time-limit. Paris "Mafficked," and M. Clemenceau declared that this was the hour for which France had waited for forty-nine years.

* * *

THE text of the revised Treaty has been published in a somewhat abbreviated form by the "Times." It shows no unexpected concessions, except that the West Prussian town of Schneidemühl and its railway to Konitz, are assigned to Germany, instead of Poland. On the other hand, it turns out that the plebiscite conceded in Upper Silesia is burdened with a condition which goes far to vitiate it. As a preliminary step, when the Allies assume control of this disputed province, the Workers' Councils are to be dissolved, and their members "evacuated," i.e., expelled. Was Paris under the impression that these are "Bolshevik" bodies? They are, of course, simply what we in this country should call Trades Councils, though elected directly by the workmen in each mine and factory. In Upper Silesia, where each mine, and sometimes each shaft, has its Council, the members all told must number many hundreds, perhaps thousands. Politically, these Councils always include Majority Socialists and Liberals (Democrats) as well as the extreme Left. To expel the elected leaders of the organized working class is, of course, to leave it in this grave hour of decision without its natural head. The suggestion presumably came from the Poles, who know very well that the Socialist workers of Silesia, be they Poles or Germans, would rather live in the semi-Socialist German Republic than in clerical, reactionary Poland. Two influences will be decisive in this plebiscite, Socialism for Germany, the Catholic Church for Poland. By expelling the Workmen's Councillors, Socialism as a factor is virtually eliminated. It was a clever stroke. Did Messrs. Lloyd George and Wilson understand what they had assented to?

* * *

TELEGRAMS, which may be much exaggerated, report that Berlin dreads a *coup d'état* on the part of the "Free Corps" against the new Government, and an attempt at the last moment to upset the conclusion of peace. Certainly if these Volunteer Corps, raised to fight the Spartacists, which number over 400,000 men, were united under a popular leader, they could do anything they pleased. There is no force in Germany to resist them, and the workers could answer (as they doubtless would) only by general strikes. The Corps, however, are not united, but are, or recently were, divided by a bitter feud. Some of them, a month ago, were even intriguing to set up an all-Socialist Government. The Scheidemann Ministry had little prestige and no popularity. The Bauer Ministry is even weaker and less representative, and will be equally detested by the Left, because it includes Noske, with Spartacist blood on his hands, and by the Right, because it has signed the peace. The real trouble with these mutinous Corps is, of course, that peace means the immediate disbandment of half of them, and the disappearance of half the remainder by next March.

* * *

THE Orlando Cabinet, which had failed to satisfy the Italian Imperialists by a diplomatic victory at Paris, and at the same time enraged the Socialists by its reactionary policy at home as well as abroad, has succumbed to a hostile vote of the Chamber. Professor Nitti, a clever but ambitious economist from Naples, has succeeded in forming a new Ministry with the veteran

Signor Tittoni as his Foreign Minister. Signor Nitti was, and apparently still is, more or less a follower of Giolitti. He is primarily interested in the economic plight of his country, believes in large measures of nationalization, and is said to look to an American Loan for salvation. That means, of course, an end to the duel with Mr. Wilson, and a compromise over Fiume. Baron Sonnino's disappearance marks the definite failure of a mean essay in Imperialism with inadequate means. Signor Nitti, however, has no easy task before him. The Nationalists are in arms against him, and have already organized riots on a large scale, while the Socialists, though they greatly prefer him to his predecessor, are not disposed to help him. His task, however, is a brief one, to wind up affairs in Paris, and then to introduce a new electoral law, with proportional representation, for an early General Election.

* * *

PRESIDENT WILSON sails from Brest immediately after the signing. It is possible that on reaching Washington he may find the Senate still wrangling over the Treaty and the League; but if so, no life will be left in the discussion. In the absence of the President, and with no authoritative lead from any of his lieutenants, the debate has been held in a vacuum. And in the meantime Senator Knox has been obliterated by Mr. Root and the Taft Republicans. The Knox resolution is dead, and the present Republican position is practically defined in a letter from Mr. Root proposing that the Senate's ratification of the Treaty and the Covenant should be subject to three reservations. These are: (1) the rejection of Article X.; (2) complete protection of the United States under the two-years' notice clause; (3) a declaration that no obligations accepted under the Covenant are to be construed as impairing the established American policy of isolation from the affairs of Europe. The last point reaffirms the position taken up by the United States at The Hague, and, clearly, it cannot be maintained in its old form if this Covenant, or any covenant of a League of Nations, is to receive the backing of the American people. Assuming that the Treaty is signed and is not followed by general revolution in Central Europe, everything in America will depend upon Mr. Wilson's line of action towards the Senate and the country.

* * *

ON June 24th America awoke to learn the interesting fact that Mr. de Valera had arrived in New York. Disdaining the formalities of the Passport Office, he had worked his way across the Atlantic, and he has enjoyed a week of immense excitement. The American Press, already prepared by the Walsh-Dunne report and Mr. Macpherson's fatal reply, is giving the Sinn Fein President an extraordinary run. Incidentally, he is engaged in raising a loan of five millions sterling, the interest upon which, it is explained, will begin to be paid when England has evacuated the Irish Republic. He may succeed in getting the amount as a free gift. Cross-examination by the New York pressmen has elicited that Mr. de Valera's origin is Spanish, but probably he is quite Irish enough for his purpose in the United States. It is noteworthy that papers markedly friendly to England are almost as generous to Mr. de Valera in the matter of space as those which enjoy making mischief between the two countries, and it can no longer be denied that the entire American public is concerned with the settlement of Ireland. The question forces itself. Is the Government directed by Mr. George and Mr. Churchill, Lord Curzon and Mr. Bonar Law, the only body in the world that remains blind to the tragic farce of a system which, with perfect impunity, the leader of Sinn Fein is able to defy and hold up to the mockery of mankind?

Mr. ASQUITH'S speeches at Leeds, with all their lucidity and felicity of language, make depressing reading. They contain not an iota of constructive statecraft, and upon the tremendous issues of foreign policy no word of criticism or guidance. We should be the last to disparage the importance of the Protectionist peril lurking in the legislative proposals and the actual administration of this Government. But to present it as the matter of chief moment at a time when war and revolution are seething in all quarters of the globe is simply ludicrous. How can Liberalism be rallied by the cry "Back to 1906"? No electioneering contrivances can raise the Free Trade issue to a rank of more than secondary importance, and Liberal prophets who are dumb upon the character of this Peace, who have no condemnation for the Russian crime, no programme of social reconstruction for the people of this country, and nothing but the ancient verbal rotundities for Ireland ("a full, a prompt, and an adequate settlement"), had best say as little as possible. The betrayal of every Liberal principle, including Free Trade, by Liberal Ministers during the war, is not and cannot be forgotten.

* * *

WE will do Mr. Shortt the justice of supposing that he had never heard of M. Longuet, and therefore that he is ignorant of the gross abuse of his office which he has committed in turning him back at Folkestone from his engagement to attend, with M. Frossard, the Labor Conference at Southport. But we also suggest that before insulting the French and the British Labor movements he should have asked somebody—anybody—in his office, to tell him. He would then have learned that M. Longuet has a European fame and lineage, and that for many years he has been one of the most popular and distinguished figures at meetings of the Trade Union Congress. Mr. Shortt seems anxious to be known as a piece of repressive machinery, much as his predecessors of the Six Acts were known, in circumstances much more creditable to themselves. Does Mr. Shortt want British Labor to feel that the State regards it as an enemy, to whom free speech and free communication with its neighbors are denied, as we denied them to the prisoners in war-time? That, at least, is the light in which his veto on M. Longuet will present itself to its leaders.

* * *

MR. ROBERTS had cold comfort to offer to the Conference of Food Control Committees last Saturday. Some prices of de-controlled articles have gone down, others have gone up. Profiteers and general grumblers favor the immediate removal of all control. But though there is no general world shortage, the increased demand for Central Europe that will follow peace will absorb a larger part of the available supply, and next winter will see prices higher than now, though lower than last winter. * The monetary cause of high prices, inflation, will not be abated, and unless the profiteer can be detected and restrained the consumer will be helpless. Nor is it a case for control of foods alone. The enquiry into prices of cloth and other woollen articles is equally essential. It looks as if every middle-man and manufacturer, relying on the fact that everyone expects to pay more, seizes the opportunity to double or treble his particular margin of profit and these excesses mount up to the monstrous prices which men for example have now to pay for suits of clothes, in face of the fact that the stock of wool in this country is larger at the present time than ever before.

PUBLIC opinion is, we think, much cooler than the Press in its judgment of Admiral von Reuter's "gesture" at Scapa Flow. He seems to have been under the impression that the war had recommenced, and accordingly he scuttled his ships, in order to deprive the enemy of their use. It may have been foolish to leave the German Fleet, as it was on this day, unguarded, but the Admiralty is not to blame for the decision to "intern" the ships with their own crews on board, instead of insisting on surrender, with British crews on board. That was a political decision, taken against professional advice at Paris, under pressure from America and possibly also from France. Our idea had always been to sink these ships, but the French, who wished to add them to their own navy, are naturally very angry, and rather against us than against the German sailors.

* * *

THE effect of divided counsels is seen in the deliberate manner in which the Triple Alliance is moving forward on the question of organizing industrial action to compel the withdrawal of troops from Russia and the abolition of conscription. A precipitate decision at Southport on Tuesday night in favor of an immediate strike, which some members of the Alliance advocate, would in all probability have revealed weakness rather than strength, and this view is confirmed by the Labor Conference discussion on the following morning. A delegate conference, representative of all the unions in the Triple Alliance, is to be held in London on July 23rd, and by that time it may be possible to discover whether the Government is impervious or susceptible to a visibly growing agitation throughout the Labor movement, especially on the question of the intervention in Russia and the alliance with reactionary militarist leaders there. If the Prime Minister counts too much upon the differences of opinion, he will risk a rude awakening. Moderate men in the Alliance note with growing concern the effect of the accumulating resentment against the Government policy in adding to the strength of the strike movement. Its leaders are pushing the campaign with increasing vigor, and the fierce demonstration at the Labor Party Conference when Russia was first mentioned is a portent and a warning which the Government would do well to heed.

* * *

At the Labor Party Conference on Wednesday, the Parliamentary party was assailed with criticism which was unfriendly to the point of harshness. It was charged against the members that their attendance to Parliamentary duties was lax, that their speeches were hardly distinguishable from those of men in other parties, and that their interest in vital questions was lukewarm. The Conference listened with an uneasy feeling that something was wrong, but it responded to an impassioned appeal by Mr. Adamson not to weaken the position of the party by dissension and carping criticism, and a motion to refer back the Parliamentary report was decisively rejected. Mr. Adamson was chiefly concerned to rebut the charges of neglect of duty, and he slurred over the larger and more important question of lack of dynamic power and moral force in the leadership of the party. Sixty members may be all but lost among seven hundred, as Mr. Adamson pleads, but Parnell, with hardly a stronger force at his command, and with far less support in the country, bent wholly hostile Parliaments to his will. The influence of the present Labor Party in the House of Commons is to be measured by the contempt with which it is treated by the Government, and particularly by Mr. Bonar Law.

Politics and Affairs.

"PEACE."

PEACE at last! The real war is over. The vote for £185,000,000 for munitions, with the sovereign at nine and ninepence, was merely taken to provide Mr. Kellaway with a text for entertaining reminiscences; it had nothing to do with taxes or with supplies to Koltchak and Denikin. It is as well to welcome peace with the majority. It was useless to wait any longer for that Dove. We accept the Turkey Buzzard in its stead. It is a fowl, anyhow. Let it suffice. And if the majority insist on cheering the bone in its beak as an olive branch, and accepting that relic as the indisputable evidence that the bird is the welcome messenger for which the world was waiting, they may be right, in a sense. This is not the time for anxious doubters to suggest that that dark and sullen messenger brings merely the token of the Dove, which he intercepted and ate while she was on her way to us.

People who have waited so long for peace do not wish to be told they have waited in vain. They are worn out. They are likely to get angry with the intellectual pride of those who find it difficult to mistake a buzzard for a dove. Only malcontents, Bolsheviks, professional finders of fault, would intrigue querulous doubts as to whether war is the same as peace. Only the perverse would shake the head when Mr. Wilson and Mr. Lloyd George tell us that one thing is as good as another, and even better, if looked at in the right spirit. None but the agitators fail to respond when such democratic leaders make appeals to the "great heart of humanity," when they speak "right out" to the "generous emotions" of all good men. It was the "Detroit News" which had a cartoon recently, showing Mars, looking relieved and satisfied, lighting his cigar with the Peace Treaty, and remarking "Gosh! They had me worried for a while."

We began with "a war to end war." Those who used that phrase, so ingenuous and catchy for recruiters needing a sufficient persuasion to get youth to face the abominations of the Ypres salient, but who meant it as their sole and sufficient excuse for either joining the Army, or persuading others to join it, now find their innocence merely provokes the hearty laughter of the militarists, who never meant anything of the sort, but who were not going to neglect a good means of getting lads into the front trenches. It certainly is an ingenuous phrase. It did appeal even to the elder and thoughtful, who were outraged by that obscene blasphemy against life called war. It was a phrase, however, almost wholly for hopeful and generous youth. He still has it with him, in his cemetery in Flanders. There are—when Mr. Lloyd George's multitude of officials have time to go over the files—twenty-three other wars, now we have peace, and causes for more and greater wars adequately provided for in the Peace Treaty. One generation of youth dies to make a world "safe for democracy," and in dying actually presents to the politicians, miraculously, for the first time in history, an opportunity for them to shape such a world; and the politicians straightway frame the conditions which will involve in a like calamity the next generation, and do it while speaking piously, with the accents of the just, with catches in the throat at the thought of dead heroes, and while the bereaved are still receiving from the War Office the papers which probe their grief.

All this is too insanely grotesque for satire. The spectacle of the world to-day, with principles, social

contracts, morality, and manners, looking as disrupted, as hopeless, and as forbidding as the prospect of the Somme battleground after the retreat, is beyond comment. It is too wildly in contradiction with all that was in the minds of good people, when the recruiting offices were so full of boys that many had to be turned away and told to call again, for any adequate expression. The silent contempt of the soldier, which most of us have witnessed, and his gesture of disgust, is as satisfying as anything we can get.

We ought to have expected this result, maybe. Wars cannot be fought, not by civilians, anyhow, without some degradation of the mind. The normal war-mind worked from but a small, inflamed, and congested area, and that spot was played upon by every irritating artifice and suggestion of the Hate Press, and is being worked upon still; for peace is of little use as an excitant to sensational newspapers. Therefore the rest of the war-mind is temporarily blind to what is happening immediately around it—the busy world being made safe for the profiteer, for "the interests," for "development of resources," for the Imperialist who thinks of oil, metals, cotton, and coal, but never of peoples except as "producers." Those are the ends which to make "safe" youth surrendered himself with complete, unquestioning, and even noble generosity.

But is it peace? Is it peace even as the militarists would care to have it? It is all very well to make war on Russia and Hungary, and call it "restoring order." But how long are the people who pay and suffer going to be satisfied with an "order" which is obtained with gas, tanks, and bombs? And what of Germany? Has she signed? Does it matter if she signs? Can she fulfil such demands? And if revolution there, revolution as a result of this "peace," makes compliance with the treaty impossible for any body of German statesmen, is it likely that we shall light our bonfires over the joyous prospect of continuing the war, in full panoply, and perhaps for a decade, as a crusade against a continent of "Bolsheviks"?

HOW THE LEAGUE WILL GOVERN.

WHEN an act of stupid brutality is perpetrated under one's eyes, if one can do nothing to prevent it, a timid instinct bids one turn away. The dictation of this peace of strangulation to Germany is the worst scene enacted in Europe since its forerunner at Brest-Litovsk, and the fact that in this case the victors talk morality instead of frankly rattling the sabre, makes it the less pleasing spectacle. The history of our continent in the next few years will be a race between the inevitable consequences of this Treaty and the quickness of the victors in repairing their folly. In a few weeks the Allies will have to deal with the armed refusal of West Prussia to be annexed to Poland. In a few months a Germany, deprived of all rights and facilities for the resumption of her foreign trade, will be grappling with the insurgent passions of her unemployed millions. If she keeps them under, it can only be by refusing to disband her Pretorian Guard. The military ascendancy of France and her Slav satellites rests on the doubtful will of weary populations to remain indefinitely under arms, for use at need in Hungary or Poland, at Odessa or Murmansk. The double war against the German race and the Socialist revolution can be maintained only by sacrifices which the peoples grow daily less ready to pay. The sober mood will come sooner or later, and the doubt is only whether it will come in time to save something of the wreck of

civilization at the Balkanized centre and the East that slips visibly into barbarism.

On one expedient the liberals who have lost the battle at Paris do well to fix our attention. The Germans have been bidden to hope for their "early" inclusion in the League of Nations. What prospect is there that France or our own reactionaries will have abated their opposition by an "early" date we do not know? It would be easy, however, to exaggerate the gains which would accrue to Germany from admission, as the Covenant stands at present. In the first place, it would not end her diplomatic isolation. Mr. Wilson, who laid down the principle that "there can be no league or alliance or special covenants or understandings within the general and common family of the League of Nations," has abandoned that position, and consented to the formation of a new triple alliance of Britain, France, and America against Germany. To be sure, it is a defensive alliance. Who in modern times has ever heard of an offensive alliance? The old Triple and the old Dual Alliances were both defensive combinations. The new essay in the old policy of the balance of power will work with the same technique of military conversations and commitments, and the allies, each with a stake in the stability of the other two, will be debarred in the old way from the pursuit of any impartial policy for the common good. Worse still, France, in her turn, is bound by military alliances to Poland, Techecho-Slovakia, and Roumania. Secret here, they are openly discussed in the Diet at Warsaw. Alliances are not made for aggression, but they give a sense of security which tempts the insured Power to ignore the dictates of moderation. What, then, does Germany gain, even if she is admitted to the Council of the League? She will have against her on every issue the solid vote of this hostile alliance. She will be, in fact, an outsider at its board, and the real work of governing the world will be done by the Allies in conclave. At least, it may be said, she will gain the reciprocity in matters of customs and transport rates refused to her in this Treaty. But as the Covenant stands, it contains no precise economic provisions. It merely commits the members of the League to "Equitable" treatment of each others' commerce. That word means nothing. Are we then going to behave "inequitably" to nations outside the League? There is no stipulation here which requires the apportionment of the world's raw materials at a uniform price, in quantities proportionate to each nation's industrial capacity. There is no requirement that members shall concede "most favored nation" tariff treatment to each other. There is nothing to forbid Mr. Bonar Law to generalize his export tax on palm-kernels, in order to make a monopoly of all our tropical produce. There is nothing to prevent the use of the Anglo-American shipping monopoly to throttle German trade. There is nothing to prevent us excluding as a "key" product every article in which competition is inconvenient; and what advocate of preferential tariffs will admit that they are "inequitable"? The League itself is, in short, so far from answering either in its political, its military, or its economic chapters to any adequate international ideal, that admission to it can solve few problems.

The current defence for this Treaty is that it is not incapable of revision, and we are told that the League is itself a ready-made instrument through which it can be revised. Lord Robert Cecil has said this with emphasis and conviction, and we can readily believe that a man of his clear vision sees the absurdity of this settlement. We do not doubt that much of it will be altered, or silently allowed to lapse. Sentry-go on the Rhine will lose its novelty in less than fifteen years, and

experience will teach that if Germany is to earn a colossal indemnity, she must be allowed some facilities for trade. But how in detail can the territorial iniquities be modified? To take the simplest case, it is expressly laid down that only the Council of the League can hereafter sanction any change in Austria's status; for example, her union with Germany. Turn to the Covenant of the League and you will find there that "except where otherwise provided all decisions of the Council or the Assembly must be unanimous." In other words, France can always veto Austria's union with Germany. Let us take a more difficult case. We will suppose that Germany is admitted to the League, and even to the Council. She finds the Polish arrangements, in whole or part, intolerable. She is flooded with refugees, and her ears din with tales of the discontent of those Germans who remain. She asks for the revision of the East Prussian settlement, or she argues that the plebiscite in Upper Silesia was vitiated (as it will be) by the prior expulsion of all the leaders of the organized working class. What procedure is open to her? She may raise the general question of revision in the General Assembly, which is expressly authorized by Paragraph 19 to "advise the reconsideration . . . of treaties." But the Assembly must be unanimous. Poland alone can break the unanimity, nor is it clear, in any event, that anything will happen if members disregard the advice of the Assembly. Or, again, Germany may apply directly to Poland, which, of course, refuses to comply. The "dispute" is then normally referred to the Council. The Council may in part think that Germany has a case. In that case it issues reports, and nothing further happens. Unless the Council is unanimous, Germany is no nearer redress, nor even then has she attained it. Unanimity is wildly improbable, so long as France protects Poland.

Assume, however, that the Council is unanimous, there is still no procedure by which the decision can be enforced, if Poland refuses to comply. The only stipulation in Article 15 that approaches enforcement is that if the award of the Council is unanimous, a member of the League must not go to war with a party which complies. There is no penalty for a party which does not comply. In the last resort Germany would have the right to go to war herself to enforce the finding of the Council. Of what use is that right? Her army will number 100,000 without staff, reserves, or heavy artillery. Poland has conscription, and with a population of twenty to thirty millions could easily raise an army of two millions, even without calling on her French allies. One other form of procedure remains—a direct reference of the actual dispute to the Assembly. Here, indeed, a majority of the Assembly suffices for a valid vote, but only if *all members of the Council concur in its decision*. At every turn the solid hegemony of the Big Four confronts us, and France or Belgium (for she also is a member of the Council) may alone veto any attempt by Germany or Austria to obtain redress of any grievance, however palpable. Bulgaria's case is no better, for her implacable enemy Greece sits with the same veto on the Council. We agree with Lord Robert Cecil that Article 10, which merely forbids armed aggression as a means of securing territorial change, is not in itself a bar to reform. Combined, however, with the veto of any member of the Council who has an interest in opposing a litigant, it is a fatal bar to change. The League, as it stands, is an insurance for every unjust gain won by bartering in these months at Paris. If we have misconstrued the Treaty, we shall gladly yield to any arguments which Lord Robert Cecil, whose good work we warmly recognize, may bring forward.

If we close with this negative note, it is only because a clear perception of the present *impasse* must precede construction. We have often outlined our own proposals for a better constitution of the League; they are substantially those of the British Labor Party and the Socialist International. The autocracy of the Big Four, the provisions for unanimity, the fictitious equality of all sovereign States in the Assembly—these make a vicious beginning. We would create a Council of Conciliation distinct from the Executive, but, above all, we would give the Assembly a Parliamentary basis, with the proportionate representation of opinions instead of the equal representation of States as solid units. But the beginning of reform is to face the fact that the present basis is fatal to any prospect of prompt revision and orderly change.

STATE MINES.

THE principal report of the Coal Industry Commission, signed by the Chairman and accepted by the miners' representatives with certain reservations, will make industrial and social history. By all the signs and portents, it will also revive the collectivist controversy in a form more severe and challenging than we have known. Comparatively, the half-forgotten disputations over the municipalization of tramways or electricity supply will appear mere street-corner academics. Much nonsense has been written during the past few days about the unsuitability of the Commission for its task. The truth is that no body of men, unless they were specially chosen because they were all biased in one direction, could have agreed to produce on the subject of nationalization a compromise report, which the "Times" suggests should have been aimed at. Admittedly, the coal inquiry has been conducted by partisans from opposite camps, but the cross-examination was exhaustive and informing because it was based on intimate knowledge of the industry, and Sir John Sankey was a chairman with exceptional capacity for sifting, appraising, and pronouncing independent and impartial judgment upon the mass of conflictig evidence. It is difficult to imagine that any inquiry, however prolonged, could have produced reports in which the issues and alternative policies were set forth more cogently or comprehensively. It is on the question of the nationalization of the mines that the vital cleavage of opinion appears. All the Commissioners agree that the individual ownership of mineral rights is indefensible, and that full possession and control must pass to the State. The objection of the miners to payment of compensation to all the owners may or may not be pressed. That, in any case, is of secondary interest. Sir Arthur Duckham's independent report is valuable for its comments and criticisms, but his constructive proposal that the coal should be leased to amalgamations of colliery owners in each district, with profits restricted to 6 per cent., has not the slightest chance of acceptance either by the mine owners or the miners.

The choice of Parliament and the nation, therefore, lies clearly between the bold and closely reasoned scheme of nationalization of the colliery industry, which Sir John Sankey recommends, and the maintenance of the existing system, modified by a few mild reforms in administration, which the mine owners advocate. The form of nationalization suggested by Sir John Sankey is clearly defined. It is bound up with essential proposals to safeguard the industry from the stultifying influences of bureaucracy, and these proposals give it a place midway

between State ownership and administration as conceived by the early Socialists, and the full control by the workers which is the aim of Guild Socialism. Beginning at the top, there would be a Minister of Mines, responsible to Parliament, who would be assisted in his task by an advisory committee of eighteen members, elected by a National Mining Council. This body would be composed of representatives of fourteen District Mining Councils, which would be in all essential respects the governing bodies in the industry. They would in their respective districts appoint the managers of the mines and exercise complete control—technical, industrial, and commercial—over the coalfields. The mine managers would be endowed with full authority in their sphere, but they would have the advice of local mining councils, upon which the workers would be strongly represented. The admission of the mine workers to the share in the effective control of the industry which they claim is determined by the composition of the district council. It is proposed that the chairman and vice-chairman shall be appointed by the Minister, and that the mine workers, consumers, and the technical and commercial interests shall each be represented by four members, making fourteen in all. The miners object that the representation of the workers is inadequate, but this difference should be capable of adjustment. If their claim is resisted by Parliament, it is hardly likely that they would run the risk of losing the whole scheme by pressing it unduly. In practice, they would have a substantial measure of control, for the other members of the Council would realize that any decision to which the representatives of the miners objected could not conduce to the harmonious and economical working of the industry.

Sir John Sankey's report is distinguished by courageous and optimistic examination of the risks which are inseparable from an industrial experiment so vast and momentous as the enterprise he recommends. He has not so poor an opinion of human nature as to believe that the community cannot command the ability and devoted service which are freely placed at the disposal of soulless trusts. His recommendations that the industry should be free from Treasury control and the stifling traditions of the Civil Service form an integral part of his scheme. Only by the exclusion of the mind fixed by bureaucratic routine can the elasticity, initiative, and enterprise be secured which are essential alike for industrial and commercial success. During the inquiry the opponents of nationalization have found a rich vein of argumentative material in the record of inefficiency and extravagance of Government departments during the war, and in their report the mine-owners assume that no better achievement is possible outside the sphere of private enterprise. Sir John Sankey meets these dialectical arguments with proposals which are framed with all the lessons derived from war experiences bearing upon them. Will his scheme allay unrest and satisfy those who demand complete control by the workers? It is impossible to answer with complete assurance, but this much may be said confidently. If this demand is met with intractable resistance, there will be grave danger of ultimate upheaval and chaos. The proposals of Sir John Sankey, if accepted, will initiate an evolutionary era during which the miners, not perhaps without transitory disputes and disaffection, will gradually widen their knowledge and experience, and adapt themselves to their new powers and responsibilities. Surveying the grave industrial problems of the coalfields, Sir John Sankey, with his singularly receptive and sympathetic mind, realizes clearly that the only hope of eliminating a paralyzing unrest is to give to the workers new and

stimulating aspirations, born of the knowledge that they have entered into a real partnership with the community, and have attained a degree of control over their own industrial conditions which it is in their power to justify and extend. The next step rests with the Government. The pledge that the report of the Commission would be accepted may now be qualified by the suggestion that it was given on the assumption that an agreed report would be presented. The coal-owners are rallying their own forces and powerful allied interests for a desperate struggle to retain private ownership and profit. The Miners' Federation could reply with either industrial or political action, but the inclination of the leaders seems to be towards electoral and Parliamentary activity in the first place. The fruits of the victory which Sir John Sankey's report implies may not therefore be gathered without further conflict, and the impending controversy may, indeed, bring to the country an opportunity to atone for its disastrous electoral blunder of last December.

A London Diary.

LONDON, FRIDAY.

WHAT the prolongation of the peace negotiations has meant to the precarious peace of the Coalition may be inferred from this week's incidents in the Commons—notably the refreshing "*à outrance*" duel on fiscal policy which broke out so suddenly between the Protectionist and Free Trade sections of Mr. Lloyd George's supposed supporters, and, on a different plane, the equally sudden confusion into which the Government's plans were thrown at the last moment by the threat of their Unionist friends against the bitterly resented Transport Bill. Other clouds are gathering fast, ready to burst, one might say, with the firing of the joy guns. Various causes for the prevailing sense of uncertainty and irritability are assigned, chief among them the Sankey Report and its expected legislative sequel, but all may be traced to a common source in the commonest malady of Coalitions—sheer incompatibility of temper between the partners. Hence the growing talk of an early dissolution, transferred at last from the lips of brow-beating Ministers to those of disillusioned back-benchers and acquiring in the process a real significance.

THE more confident gossip of a General Election—a little better than the mere vapor of volatile thought—is of Irish origin. Mr. George, faced with the continuously increasing menace of events abroad arising out of the "Peace," and of their reaction on home affairs, will choose Ireland to split us upon next time. He favors, with Lord Northcliffe, a form of Dominion Government. It will be a dexterous move. All the issues will be entangled once more. Ireland will get confused round the first turning to the left in the Polish Corridor, where it will run into the Bolsheviks, both will fall struggling into the Saar Valley, where the League of Nations will be fighting the Protectionists, and through it all will be heard the monotonous hooting, as of Bedlam during a raid, of the Imperialists calling for a two to one standard in a Lewisite Poison policy. While still busy hammering each other, the Little Wizard, to the surprise and disgust of the heated disputants, will appear over us, smiling his Victory Smile, cool and amused. We shall subside again, still more beautifully entangled, a greater and a more self-respecting people than ever.

WHATEVER may have been the official words addressed by Admiral Fremantle to Admiral von Reuter and the German officers assembled aboard H.M.S. "Revenge," I have not spoken to a British sailor who did not heartily approve of the action of the German sailors in sinking their fleet. "I must admit I did not expect them to do it," said one naval officer to me, "but I know I should have done it in their place." The comments of the Jingo press, where a fellow feeling might have been expected to have allowed a glimmer of sense on at least this German episode, were comic. Yet perhaps the last place where an understanding of patriotism would be looked for is in the ultra-patriotic newspapers. What from ourselves would be noble, to the inflamed Jingo is proof of an enemy's low and treacherous character. Had the "Revenge" been confined in a German harbor, and if her captain had imagined he would be ordered by his politicals to hand her over to the enemy, he would have remembered much—he would have remembered her Flores legend, for one thing—and have opened her sea-valves, and when quite sure she was doomed, let her go down with the right ensign in the right place. Is it a further count against the Germans that they should copy, not only our ships, but our faithfulness to a great tradition? Even on the practical side, we should thank those enemy sailors for a friendly act. They have saved us much trouble. There are now so many destructive engines the less in the world. We could manage, without effort and grief, with still less. But imagine the deafening uproar if Mr. Asquith had been Premier! Luckily, it is the Coalition, whose souls are pure and lily-white with hate.

ARE those British gentlemen who can count the Bath among the tributes to their work and character now going to vindicate their honor by returning that particular decoration to the King? It must be rather difficult to display it now. It is not pleasant to be associated with such a man as Denikin, even were he but a stranger as far off as the tenth table in a coffee-room; but when he is signalled out, as a particular favor, to come up higher, as a brother, and consort with equals where none but the elect should be allowed, it is no better than putting British honors between inverted commas or on a pedlar's tray. The reason for this grave indignity is obvious, of course. The emanation from Denikin's record is beginning to spread. But the Premier and Mr. Churchill have committed us to Denikin's work, so it is necessary to disguise his reputation (and to hide their own mistake, too, in giving him the support of the British flag) by sacrificing a British honor to save our nostrils. We shall hear next that the Order of Merit has gone to Koltchak.

WE English used to be considered an unmusical people, yet I doubt if in any other nation, except Germany, so large and so enthusiastic an audience would have met to hear Bach, and nothing but Bach, as gathered the other day in the Wigmore Hall. There was no composer but Bach and no instrument but the piano. It is true that the pianist was Mr. Harold Samuel, who has lately taken his rightful place among our leading musicians, and in Bach is heard perhaps at his very best. His performance was indeed superb. Even as a mere matter of memory it was a marvel, for the programme included four main divisions, and three of the divisions consisted of five or six separate movements apiece. Perhaps the highest triumph was reached in the final "Italian Concerto"; but throughout the

recital the whole audience lay under the spell of the delicate beauty of interpretation, and the perfection of technique alike.

IN next week's NATION will appear the first of a series of articles on "Some American Characteristics," by H. W. M.

CARETAKER.

Life and Letters.

OF GESTURE.

WHEN Cyrano de Bergerac excused himself for flinging to the actors the full purse which left him penniless, he almost created a new word—"Mais quel geste!" Count if you can the times that the word "gesture" has been used by our writers since that cry first delighted the world! Certainly we spoke of gestures before. We would say that an actor had fine gestures or wooden gestures. Novelists would describe their heroes and heroines as acting with a noble gesture or a disdainful. Naturally, the word was always common even among a people like ours, which uses so little gesticulation and is trained from the cradle to suppress it, unlike the races in less happy lands who speak with all their bodies. But now the use has slightly changed, and we speak of gesture all by itself and without adjective, as implying a grand or Quixotic action like Cyrano's. There must be something superb and ideal about it, and perhaps it should always involve a personal loss or renunciation. When, in some old poem, the Arab who had sold his beautiful horse and then thought better of it, cried in repentance, "I fling them back their gold," it was a parallel gesture. When Dr. Johnson, as a poor undergraduate at Pembroke, flung away the slippers which someone had placed in pity at his door, it was a gesture, and a proud one. When "F. T. S.," in last Tuesday's "Times," announced that he was contributing a fifth of his large property to wiping out the National Debt, it was a gesture, only less fine because, after all, he remains a rich man. When a captain or colonel upon the front of an old battle, cried to the admiring air, "Let the enemy shoot first," it was a gesture, though foolish. When St. Martin of Tours gave half his cloak to a beggar, it was a gesture, though it might have been finer if he had given it all. We do not know if an admiral has ever literally nailed his colors to the mast with a hammer, but if that has ever happened, it was the gesture with which an admiral might wave farewell to the world. If anyone cried at Waterloo, "The Old Guard dies, but never surrenders," that was a gesture too.

Most of these gestures have been rapid and visible, springing from the moment, though long latent in the character, just as an artist's work may be done in an hour though it has taken him a lifetime. But a gesture can wave farewell to prosperity or to the world in more deliberate fashion. Renunciation of high place may display the pride of gesture, as when, after saving Rome, Cincinnatus returned to his farm, took off his toga, and ploughed in his shirt. It was with gesture that Sulla laid aside the trappings of Dictatorship, defended his office in the Forum as an ordinary citizen, and withdrew to the curious amenities of the Neapolitan seaside. As a gesture Diocletian constructed his vast palace at Spalato, and said good-bye to the world he had saved from barbarism, but could not save from Christianity. Similar was the gesture of Celestino V., who made "il gran

rifiuto," and alone of Popes abdicated from his holy office because he deemed a hermitage more holy than Rome herself. So also Charles V., Emperor of the World, at the height of power unequalled since Charlemagne, withdrew to the mortifications of a monastery, and adopted penitence in place of splendor. One can hardly say whether the marriage of St. Francis to Poverty was a gesture of the same kind, for St. Francis was not a man of gesture, and his choice of bride was rather a renunciation for his relations than for himself. The same is true of Buddha when he left his family and sat under the Bo tree, setting an example which millions of mankind would so gladly follow. Indeed, that kind of renunciation is common in India, where so often a high official or man of business shakes himself free of affairs, withdraws to the solitude of a mountain cave, or sets his face in pilgrimage towards some distant shrine, and, measuring the earth with his body like a geometer caterpillar, crawls over the intervening miles into the presence of the god.

"Good-bye, proud world, I am going home," cried Emerson, and though he never got further than his library at Concord, where, indeed, he had been already at home, that was a gesture too. When Cæsar set aside the diadem which Antony twice offered him at the Lupericalia, it was a gesture, however politic. When St. Cuthbert retired to Holy Island he was probably as unconscious of proud humility as was St. Francis; but when Father Stanton refused a Prebendary Stall at St. Paul's—that office being the ecclesiastical position of which the Anglican Church thought him most worthy—he may possibly have acted with a gesture of disdain. For the finest gesture of renunciation we must, however, go to the Gospel itself:—

"Again the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; and saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me. Then saith Jesus to him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve."

Men like Cobden have refused office in Governments which they thought unprincipled. Carlyle refused a baronetcy, or something of that kind, offered him by Disraeli. Others have quite lately refused an "O.B.E." Even journalists have been known to refuse to write against their convictions. But let us rather seek gestures more definite or more dramatic. Martyrdom in itself is a gesture, and has always been recognized as one of the finest, except by those who inflict it. We perceive the gesture with which Socrates refused to escape from the condemned cell in Athens, because he would not break his country's laws. It was a gesture equally fine, and calling for something of a martyr's spirit too, when he stood up in the theatre to show the populace the very man whom the Comedian was mocking in the "revue." As a martyr, Regulus adjured his people to return him to Carthage rather than conclude a shameful peace, though well he knew what tortures the savages were preparing for his death. At the execution of heroes and of heroines the "gesture" has been frequent. With a gesture, Cranmer held his hand in the flame till it was consumed—that hand which had written the noble language of the Prayer Book for our inheritance. With a gesture, Raleigh, preparing for execution, said to a probable bystander, "I do not know what you may do for a place; for my part I am sure of one"; and when asked which way he would lie upon the block, he observed, "It is no matter which way the head lies, so the heart be right." With a gesture, full of the sweetest English irony, Sir Thomas More moved his beard carefully from the block, and said, "Pity that should be

cut; that has never committed treason." And so, too, Madame Roland, "clad in white, with her long black hair hanging down to her girdle":—

"There went with her a certain Lamarche, whose dejection she endeavored to cheer. Arrived at the foot of the scaffold, she asked for pen and paper, 'to write the strange thoughts that were rising in her,' a remarkable request, which was refused. Looking at the Statue of Liberty which stands there, she says, bitterly: 'O Liberty, what things are done in thy name!' For Lamarche's sake, she will die first; show him how easy it is to die. 'Contrary to the order,' said Samson. 'Pshaw, you cannot refuse the last request of a Lady'; and Samson yielded."

A gesture of martyrdom marked the end of the gladiatorial combats in Rome—a notable instance of the truth how beggarly arguments appear in comparison with one defiant deed. It was at the games to celebrate the victory of Honorius in 404 A.D. Laws had been passed throughout the previous century forbidding the games, but hundreds, if not thousands, of victims were still slaughtered in the amphitheatres of the Empire every year. On this occasion even a Christian poet appealed to the Emperor to extirpate the atrocious custom, but even the appeal of poetry failed. Whereupon Telemachus, an Asiatic monk, leapt into the arena, hoping to separate the gladiators, and was overwhelmed under a shower of stones from the enraged spectators. His death, says the historian, was more useful to mankind than his life, for he was the only monk who died a martyr to the cause of humanity. His gesture abolished that kind of human sacrifice in Europe, and up to the present time, murder has not been revived as a spectacle for our amusement. A similar gesture of protest was also made in this country some six years ago, when Emily Davidson rushed in among the horses at Tattenham Corner and was killed, not in protest against the Derby games, but in hope of drawing attention to a wrong more ancient than the human sacrifices of Rome.

A gesture may be false, much as a play may be bad. When Raleigh spread his cloak over the puddle, it was a false gesture, for he knew well enough what he was about, and on which side his cloak was muddied. Probably he would not have spread it before a lousy old beggar woman, or even a Covent Garden wench. When an Indian says of some particularly lovely treasure, "It is yours, like all I possess," it is a false gesture, though a charming one, for he knows that no decent person, except an occasional Viceroy, will ever take him at his word, and disappear with the treasure. When King Lear distributed his property, it was a false gesture, for his purpose was ignoble ease. Whether the gesture was fine or false when Chatham thundered out his speech in defiance of his bandages depends upon the reality or assumption of his gout. But, unhappily, there can be no doubt that Burke's gesture was false when, in discussing an Alien Bill while vulgar feeling was fiercely inflamed against the French, he played the dagger scene:—

"Fox," writes Lord Morley, "denounced the Bill as a concession to foolish alarms, and was followed by Burke, who began to storm as usual against murderous atheists. Then without due preparation, he began to fumble in his bosom, suddenly drew out a dagger, and with an extravagant gesture threw it on the floor of the House, crying that this was what they had to expect from their alliance with France."

We cannot wonder that there was a general tendency to titter, and the tendency would not be diminished when Burke went on to call upon them to keep French principles from their heads, and French daggers from their hearts; to preserve all their blandishments in life,

and all their consolations in death; all the blessings of time, and all the hopes of eternity. We confess that till we read this passage, it never occurred to us to compare Burke with Mr. Bottomley.

We find that in "gesture," however serious and sincere, there is usually something dramatic, or even melodramatic—something that would tell upon the stage. It must reveal character, and the aim must be high. When George II. told his dying wife that he would never marry again—"he would keep mistresses"—the saying was dramatic; it revealed character, it implied, we may suppose, a certain amount of renunciation; but only in mockery could it be called gesture. When Jeremy Bentham bequeathed his body to anatomy, it was a kind of gesture—a mortal and conscious renunciation, though of something valueless to himself. The question how to characterize Admiral von Reuter's action in scuttling his fleet rather than let it fall into the possession of the bitterest enemies, raises vehement and contrary opinions; but undoubtedly that was a "gesture." Other gestures there are that we might call negative or of minus quantity, and those are often of the finest kind; as when Peel, through the heat of Dizzy's violent abuse, retained Dizzy's letter asking for place, and made no use of it to destroy his tormentor; or when Parnell so often kept silence. Or when we here renounce the interest of the subject without considering what kind of a gesture it would have been if President Wilson had quitted the Paris Conference six months ago and waved adieu to Europe with all her chaotic animosities.

IN AND NEAR SELBORNE.

If a man, be he ornithologist and lover, wishes to get the feel of Gilbert White and Selborne, let him read Mr. W. H. Hudson's account of his first visit to this remote little Hampshire village. Mr. Hudson sat under that famous, patriarchal yew in the churchyard, and there, not the ghost, but a kind of earthly emanation, a faint surviving image of the man, appeared to him. The two conversed and compared notes, the eighteenth century questioning, the twentieth responding. And this duet is an incomparable piece of prose, by which we are made to comprehend what is hidden in the difference between the eighteenth century and the modern attitude to nature, to all but imagination. Nor, in a few lines, could the intimate personality of the gentle, domestic, old scholar of nature be more completely and magically summoned out of the past. When, therefore, I set out for Selborne over the high tableland from Petersfield through Froxfield and East Tisted, I felt I was doing the best I could for the emotional promise of the day by keeping an attentive eye for the birds in my neighborhood and an attentive inward ear for that refined and spiritualized conversation, like the vivid though leisurely intonations of two blackbirds. I was glad to find the yellowhammer common along the hedgerows, for he is a favorite of mine, and I wasted a good deal of time watching them singing their little hymns of praise, like a sighing gust of wind among tall grasses, beaks comically lifted to heaven and golden heads shining in the sun. It is a curious thing that White never distinguished between the yellow and the much rarer curl bunting. Here, too, turtle doves had settled for the summer and their low, tremulous croodling notes accompanied me for a couple of miles. They have a bewitching love-flight, sailing down to earth, with

arched wings and expanded white-barred tails, in a slanting glide, that makes the curves of Milo's Venus look insignificant. There were several pairs of lapwings building in the fields, and I once turned aside to try and find a nest, not because I cared whether I found it or not, but simply for the pleasure of having their company in a world where the wild birds shun our presence as Coleridge's walker fled the "fearful fiend, That close behind him treads." So I walked about, enjoying the unique sensation of these glorious birds following me all over the field, flying close round my head, and displaying the utmost anxiety and fearlessness. But at last I grew ashamed of getting my pleasure at the expense of a noble passion and slunk off, being seen safely and some distance off the premises by the outraged tenants. So I jogged along that lavish and varied, though never grand country; finding both whitethroats, the lesser just as demonstrative and excitable as his cousin, and singing his garrulous warble (like the chaffinch's without the upward note at the end, and shriller and more piercing), with crest raised, body shaken, and throat puffed out in the fine frenzy of melody; hearing an occasional blackcap and garden warbler, and seeing two or three jays and magpies, loveliest of all the feathered outcasts—until I arrived at the long, winding street of Selborne village.

The first thing I did was to climb the "zig-zag" (constructed in White's time) of Selborne Hangar, to wander on the common. Birds do not frequent the beech which White called "the most lovely of all forest trees, whether we consider its smooth rind or bark, its glossy foliage, or graceful pendulous boughs," for the simple reason that its woods permit no undergrowth, and nowadays there are no honey-buzzards (as there were in his) to build upon the canopy of foliage. But there were none on the common, the wildest, most desolate, and untamed land, commanding many a fine prospect of the irregular, rolling, fecund Hampshire country. It was a paradise for birds, with wide spaces, isolated trees, thick matted undergrowth of bramble and furze and thorn, and, indeed, every variety of unclipped, untended bush, and little areas of bracken and grassland. Yet in this seventh heaven for feathered cherubs, I heard but the commonest songs and saw but three birds—a swallow, a jay, and a hen blackbird. True, I found a throstle's nest, and that went some way towards compensating me. How wonderfully beautiful the eggs are in their natural home—little blue oval skies, powdered at the poles with black stars and with a greenish tinge over the blue, as if the earth had stained the heavens! In the collector's cabinet they look and are no more than pebbles or colored marbles. So I made haste to avoid the bitterness which a realization of the steady decline in wild bird-life always brings, and set off down the pretty village street for the Plestor, the little square with the sycamore which has supplanted "the vast oak, the delight of young and old," overturned by a tempest in 1703. Thence into the churchyard, keeping the eyes resolutely turned away from "The Wakes," which now looks like a suburban residence of London. Well, thank God for the churchyard and the mossy-girthed yew and the cypresses and the squat, square tower of the church. Thank, too, the blessed spirit of the place which hides the small leaning gravestone of Gilbert White with long, waving grasses. That stone, with "G. W." upon it and the dates of his birth and death, is still inviolate, and no progressive person has stood over it and exclaimed: "What needs my Gilbert for his honored bones?"—while the affrighted familiars of the spirit shrieked and departed. But all the screams I heard were the soft,

inflected ones of the greenfinches, varied with their delightful fluttering song. In the big sycamore, where, Mr. Hudson tells us, he saw the cirl bunting (I saw him on the way home), the "ecclesiastical daw" was building and the hole was so small that the female took half a minute to squeeze herself through. Lower down on the same tree, a flycatcher had its perch, and repeatedly swung off it to round up a fly in a sweeping curve and return. In White's time, twelve pairs of swifts circled the tower; when Mr. Hudson went to Selborne, it was eight, and I saw but two, though this year swifts outnumber both swallows and house-martins put together. It made me uncomfortable to think what White would feel about our dwindling "hirundines," dwindling so surely year by year, now that the French, Spaniards, and Italians have found a new and improved method of taking them on migration, so that the security and quietude of that old churchyard seemed menaced and ruffled, and I left it.

I went home by the Liss main road. Every half-minute or so, motor-cars passed by in a convulsion of stinks, dust, whirr and hoots. In the middle of the road, perfectly quiet and composed, stood a little bird, uttering every few seconds a subdued, pensive, sorrowful little twitter. Whenever a motor squealed by, it fluttered under the very wheels into a near holly-bush, and when the clamor had subsided, flew down again into the same place, uttering that plaintive call. I was astounded when I recognized the shy goldfinch. So I walked up to where it stood (it was a male), and there I found the body of another goldfinch—not a body, but a shell, all that was left being the outer skin clothed in faded feathers. It had been dead several days. I took the bird and laid it in some long grass by the roadside, and as soon as I had turned my back, the live bird flew down from the holly and perched beside the grass, uttering his mournful, scarce audible little requiem. Then at last did I understand that strange talk between the two naturalists in Selborne churchyard, now that nature had shown me this mystery and wonder.

M.

Music.

LA BOUTIQUE FANTASQUE.

It is possible, I hope, to love "La Boutique Fantastique" without showing Titian to a back seat or speaking of Beethoven as a romantic, dull vulgarian. The Russian Ballet have never produced anything more amusing or more immediately attractive. How anyone can hesitate between such a delightful entertainment and the dreary banalities of the theatre or the opera I simply cannot understand. "La Boutique Fantastique" is so tremendously alive, so exhilarating, that we catch our breath at the sheer exuberance of it all.

When, however, we are asked by the enthusiasts to acclaim "La Boutique Fantastique" as the last word in the art of ballet, it is quite necessary for the critic to reserve judgment. The elect are not pleased when you call it a modern "Coppélia," but, as a matter of fact, you are paying it too high a compliment. "Coppélia" marked an epoch in the history of ballet, and "La Boutique Fantastique" does nothing of the kind. The one, with Delibes's music sounding to-day as attractive as ever it did, stood for an idea definitely new; the other, with all its charm, is an up-to-date version of a familiar theme, with music by a composer long since dead, resuscitated "for one night only." Moreover, if one must criticize, it is right to point out that there is

nothing especially remarkable about the dancing. Lopokova does her *can-can* beautifully, but *can-cans* and cake-walks, at their best, can hardly be reckoned as great dancing. Nor is the choreography uniformly good. The design and execution of the enthronement of Lopokova, with its Venus-rising-from-the-sea effect, is perfect in every way, but some of the rest is very muddled and, in one or two places, almost awkward. For my part, I miss Fokine's precision and sureness of touch—but was there ever, since Noverre, such a master of choreography as he?

Rossini's music sounds extraordinarily bright and apposite. The *pizzicato* and the *can-can* pleased me most of all. The latter, especially, is the most delightfully cheeky piece of music imaginable. Rossini was in his life the soul of wit and impertinence, and I think he would be pleased to know that, even in his death, he has not lost the power to amuse and shock. Whoever originated the idea of unearthing and collecting these scraps of music deserves our gratitude. Our pedants and pedagogues are, and always have been, as silly about Rossini as about Liszt. Wagner knew better; he loved this clear, sparkling music. But the average "cultured amateur," condescending, perhaps, to a patronizing approval of "William Tell" because it is comparatively heavy and Teutonic, raises his eyebrows at "The Barber of Seville," sniffs a little and passes on. This attitude is quite absurd. Rossini's genius was of a species akin to and only inferior to that of Mozart. People in England and Germany under-rate it because it is gay and easy to understand. To some minds nothing seems really great that is not slightly unintelligible.

"La Boutique Fantasque," like "Good-Humored Ladies," is interpreted in a semi-grotesque, marionette-like medium. There is no hint of the wonderful *mime* that made "Petrouchka" in reality the epoch-making ballet which people profess to recognize in this later production. "*Mime*," said Noverre, "is the soul of the dance," and even our iconoclastic generation must respect the dogmas of the man whom Garrick christened "The Shakespeare of the Dance." "Petrouchko" owes its importance to the extraordinary and novel emotional poignancy achieved by its *mime*, as well as the perfect compatibility of the story and music with one another. In short, "Petrouchka" is a masterpiece, while "La Boutique Fantasque" is only a masterpiece of its kind.

There is, of course, no emotion in the latter at all; indeed, the whole tendency of the later productions of the ballet is unemotional, even anti-emotional. The place of emotion is taken by brightness of color. This is, I suppose, the tendency of modern art in general, and it may be welcomed, perhaps, as a reaction against the nineteenth century tyranny of romanticism. Nevertheless it is difficult to imagine an art that can live by color and decorativeness alone. Literature clearly cannot; nor music. Painting never has—for long. The art of ballet has, probably, more chance than the others, being, in essence, so decorative. But the greatest personalities in the history of the dance have always protested that the dance possesses emotional capabilities never yet realized; have insisted that the dance is peculiarly suited for the expression of emotion. Whether this be so or not it is certain that we moderns have no idea of the emotional possibilities latent in *mime*. Was it not of Roscius that we were told that he could move an audience to tears without speaking a word? Perhaps one day the apparent *impasse* of modern music-drama may be circumvented by some union of music and *mime*. But it seems unlikely as if this will be accomplished permanently by anything in the tradition of "La Boutique Fantasque." Very possibly M. Diaghilev and those with him are wise enough to care nothing for permanence. But it is the business of a critic, nevertheless, to point out that the so-called Italian school of conventional *mime*, once reputed so decorative, has died not only because we have come to find it lacking in emotion, but because we all now vote it—dull.

FRANCIS TOYE.

Short Studies.

IN NORTH WALES.

THIS is a haunted land. Although mountainous (at any rate in the sense of the word applicable to these islands) it is not all precipices or rock. Sheep can pasture to the summits, and only a little way below the peaks the land can be tilled.

There have always been people here, and indications of their ancient habitations remain on all sides, in the unsullied air, and among curlews' piping or the singing of willow-wrens. The ruins of the castles that Edward the First built when shaking the mailed fist at Wales are but elderly in comparison with other remains of more ancient occupancies and feuds. Some of the stones of Conway Castle (erected originally by Hugh Lupus, Earl of Chester, and rebuilt by order of Edward the First) were appropriated, on a neighboring hill, from a castle in ruins there in those days; and this Castle of Conway and the Tudor House (Plas Mawr) in its excellent preservation, are merely elderly in contrast with the hut-circles on Conway Mountain above the town. Even the Plas Mawr stands on the site of a former dwelling.

The spirit of antiquity broods over the land for any visitor who has natural sensitiveness to the proofs of predecessors in the world. The old wall of Conway still stands, though topped now with waving grass and spattered over with wall-flowers in crannies. Tourists in the motors from Llandudno (with its exhilarating air, its windy promenade, its pierrots, its cafés, and its shops), on their way to Llanberis for Snowdon, pass under arches—the old "gates" in the wall—under which Llewellyn's people must have passed. There is an enchantment in the place. Only six hours journey by train from Euston, it is like a foreign country to the Londoner.

The Welsh speech is spoken in all the upland farms, and in the villages in the valleys; and in the little old towns the people are bi-lingual. That feeling of being abroad doubtless comes as a surprise to the visitor from England, and has its charm; but for all, the native and the visitor, there is the impression of antiquity. It dwells there like the scent of lavender and mint in old gardens.

You decide, perhaps, in the hotel breakfast room, looking out of the window as you munch your toast and marmalade, to climb a peak, with the old solemnity of which the sun and the flying clouds are playing tricks as you gaze. You start out in its direction, upon a macadamized road, with instructions where to turn aside into tributary lanes, or where to climb a stile to circumvent a shoulder of foot-hill by a field-path. Your object is, perhaps, only to climb a mountain for the fun of the thing, the inflation of your lungs, and the pleasure of a wide prospect. But before you reach your peak you will have many surprises.

The bridge you espy from the modern road may seem oddly simple, sufficient, and somehow different from other bridges. While you are still wondering why it strikes you as unusual you come, following the advice given at the hotel, to a grass-grown lane, into which you turn. It seems, grass-grown though it be, highly purposeful. Then the truth dawns: you cross a Roman bridge and are walking on a Roman road. A thin trickle of smoke from a chimney stack, almost hidden in a crease of the hill, marks a lead-mine, still being worked, that the Romans worked—and maybe others before the Romans came.

Higher up, with only the bleating of sheep round you, and the occasional shadow of a gull that comes careening over a seaward crest, you blunder upon what at first you take for a sheep-fold. Wisps of fleece, fluttering on the rough wall, aid toward that belief; yet it is not like most sheep-folds you have seen. Approaching it you find that the entrance is low. Crawling through you discover a great stone—a great slab of stone—lying on the earth within. It is the old door of an ancient British hut. You stand quiet looking round the place, tip-toe up and gaze over the wall into

the next circle of stones, or bend down and peer in (like the picture of an Eskimo entering his ice-house), and the sensation of being in a foreign country dwindles before that of being upon a visit to your ancestors of two thousand years ago—and finding none of them at home! Only the wind whistles over the walls that once their thatches covered.

It is a haunted land, and yet without any suggestion of the sinister. I could camp for the night to lee of the wall there without a childish dread, or barbarian's inclination to devise an incantation against evil. On the crest of the hill above, the winds of years have sifted the earth from a dolmen. The cromlech stones, many tons in weight (one wonders by what simple yet forgotten device they were raised), stand naked in the sun.

It must always have been a countryside thickly inhabited. It is dappled with ruins of historic and prehistoric homes, burial mounds from battles, or from long settled occupancies. A little butterfly, green and brown, like the grass and the soil, sits pulsing its wings on a standing stone that I pause to consider further on. What sites they chose, these lost people, for their circles of standing stones—or, I should say, for what the standing stones are the remains of! The butterfly flutters away, knowing itself observed, and blends with the grass. Only by walking round about, and slowly to and fro, can I have opportunity to see its fascinating markings again. The stone is warm to my palm, and I wonder what the hands were like that raised it, and what thoughts were in the minds of the toilers here.

The answer is, I fancy, that they were thoughts very much like mine: They, too, saw the sun in the blue sky and were grateful for its warmth, for the white and gold of clouds. They, too, knew the smell of summer-scorched bracken, and found it good. They saw, as we see to-day, the flying arrow of mallard duck overhead, and the shadow of the covey skim the hills. When they lit a fire the smell of wood-smoke gave them a sense of home, and a sense also of unrest. They, too, wondered, as the smoke was dissipated in the summer air, what life was all for (apart from the feuds of kings, and the lust for lead, or tin, or gold), where they had come from, where they were going. And this wonder in their hearts, for some of them, was exploited by medicine-men and priests (the "Druid circle" still stands within sight of the chapel of "Saint" Somebody or Other, who laid the foundation stone in the sixth century); but others preferred to dream their own dream of the mystery that could both raise the tranquil crest of Talyfan and invent violets and shelter them in the grass.

FREDERICK NIVEN.

Present-Day Problems.

THE "THIRSTY FIRST" IN AMERICA.

If it were not so fully taken up with Paris and Scapa Flow, with exploits in the air and the playing-fields, the British public might well be giving a little attention to the most astounding social fact of the age. The American Republic has, by Act of Congress, put the absolute ban on liquor. Legally, it is to go dry on Tuesday next, July 1st. On the morning of that day, unless the President, before setting sail from Brest, has proclaimed the end, not of the war only, but of demobilization, the manufacture and sale of intoxicating liquor in the United States will become an indictable offence. As Canada has already accepted Prohibition, the whole North American continent, above Mexico, is attempting something that British opinion looks upon as preposterous.

Congress reassembled on May 19th. In the concluding paragraph of his message, President Wilson recommended the repeal of the special wartime legisla-

tion restricting the manufacture and sale of liquor. Congress has declined to act upon the recommendation. On June 18th the Senate voted down a motion for repeal, by 55 votes to 11. That is to say, a Senate very largely hostile to Mr. Wilson, with the party balance slightly in favor of the Republicans, refuses to take any step to prevent the coming of National Prohibition. It refuses even to postpone a change, almost unimaginable in character, for which, assuredly, the administration is unprepared.

If we take into account the whole circumstances of the past ten years, there is nothing very surprising in the victory of Prohibition. The capture of State after State, and the much more rapid spread of local option, carried a meaning which could not be gainsaid. I recall that, in the early part of 1914, a dispatch from the Washington correspondent of the "Times" described the formidable character of the movement and indicated its practically inevitable result. One is disposed to say that the inexplicable thing is not the victory—for that was brilliantly organized—but the impotence of the Wets. When once the movement had gathered momentum, they appeared unable to mobilize any force of opposition, except in certain Eastern States and in the very large cities. In the West they were helpless against the Dry sentiment. In the South they were already beaten, since, obviously, they could not stand up against the white majority which had decided that Prohibition was inevitable as a protection against the Negro. It was noticeable, too, that as time went on the vote of the large centres became of relatively less importance. The huge industrial population of Detroit, mostly foreign born, did not keep Michigan from going Dry; nor could St. Louis, with its mighty breweries and its 200,000 people of German origin, save Missouri. In California the Drys were repeatedly beaten in San Francisco, but the State electorate returned a legislature pledged to vote for National Prohibition. With every trial in Illinois the Drys came nearer to voting down Chicago.

When, therefore, after December, 1917, the State legislatures were called upon to decide the amazing question whether a federal amendment establishing National Prohibition should be added to the Constitution of the United States, there was, literally, no resistance left for the Wets to rely upon. The amendment, already passed by the requisite two-thirds majority in both Houses of Congress, was ratified by 45 out of the 48 States between January, 1918, and January, 1919. The thirty odd Prohibition States, of course, could do no other; but what were the Wets to say when New York, Massachusetts, and Pennsylvania, refusing to go dry by State law, voted for a bone-dry Republic?

The usual explanation is that the Anti-Saloon League controls all the legislatures, including the House and the Senate in Washington, and that neither Representatives nor Senators dare vote against Prohibition because of the tyrannical use which the League is known to make of its power. One hesitates to accept this plea on behalf of weak-kneed legislators, although there can be no question as to the grip and completeness of the League machine. The Wets contend further that national Prohibition was secured while the country was subject to the abnormal emotions of war-time. That, mainly, is so. And certainly last year the Wets were strategically in a futile position. The Presidential edicts, stopping the manufacture of whisky and beer, were expedients for saving foodstuffs. Plainly the Wets could not oppose them. The law now coming into effect is of the same kind. It is a rider to a Food Conservation Act. But the war was actually over when it was passed. The President signed it on November 21st, ten days after the Armistice, and therefore, you would say, when the crowd emotion of mingled exaltation and panic was no longer strong enough to carry a measure out of accord with the settled opinion of the majority. In the meantime, however, the Drys point out, a Senate Committee in Washington had been investigating the ramifications of enemy pro-

paganda. It unearthed evidence as to the activity of certain brewers in perverting patriotic opinion and corrupting the Press. Liquor had once again got itself, as they say, "in bad." The Drys were able to stress its German proclivities. Brewing had become un-American.

The impartial observer would say that a strong case could be made out for the repeal of war-time Prohibition, if only on the ground that the six-months' interval before January 16th, the date when the constitutional amendment comes into effect, is needed to create the mechanism of enforcement. But the Wets do not appear to have handled their case well; and the Drys, naturally, are too intent upon the immediate victory to consider whether concession now might not be likely to make their ultimate triumph more assured. The Wets are trying all possible ways of securing legal decisions which will enable them to get past "the Thirsty First." They are asking for a judicial declaration (which could not help them) that the war is over; and they are inviting the courts to decide that beer and wine containing a 2.75 percentage of alcohol is non-intoxicating. And, by way of direct action, they are enlisting great numbers of people in a League to Oppose National Prohibition and inciting the labor unions to proclaim a general strike under the inspiring banner of No Beer, No Work. By a large majority the annual convention of the American Federation of Labor has registered a protest against national Prohibition; but, obviously, no body of opinion led by Mr. Samuel Gompers could vote for a general strike upon such an issue. It is hardly necessary to suggest that the newspapers and leagues which denounce Prohibition as Bolshevism ought to be chary of using the Bolshevik weapon. Nor need it be pointed out that for the Wets to organize a spectacular orgy on the eve of the Thirsty First is the least effective way of proving that liquor is an essential of civilized living. Had the Wets been sensible enough to cleanse the saloon and keep it out of politics, they might have won. Moreover, this powerful fact is to be noted. America, in the present stage, is controlled by Business, and Business wants a dry community.

R.

Letters from Abroad.

A MILEPOST FOR AMERICAN LABOR.

To the Editor of THE NATION.

SIR,—It is not likely that the British Press has given its readers any account of an American labor conference recently held in Pittsburgh. Even in the United States this meeting has had little comment. Yet it marks an important event, in some ways the most significant single happening in the recent history of American unionism. Chief among the issues it raises is the question of trade union organization along "industrial" rather than "craft" lines.

The Pittsburgh conference had its origin in a new attempt on the part of the unions to carry trade unionism into the great steel plants of Pennsylvania, Illinois, and Ohio. The steel companies have a record of bitter and effective hostility to union labor. No one unfamiliar with the development of industrialism in America can know how determined their opposition has been, and how considerable a part it has played in checking the advance of trade unionism. A number of times the unions have attempted to penetrate the defences of the steel companies. They have failed in each instance. And from their failure reactionary employers in many industries have drawn encouragement and a new reason for continued opposition.

What marks the present effort of the unions to organize the steel and iron workers is a recognition of the chief reason for their failure in the past. Organized labor admits that the single-handed effort of the "craft" union cannot win against a great concentration of company power. It accordingly combines in a temporary alliance every craft union that enters into the business of making steel. The thoroughness with which the combination has been effected is remarkable. The metal mine-workers come into the new alliance because they

produce the original ore; the seamen join, because they bring much of the ore down across the Great Lakes from the mines of northern Minnesota; the coal-miners, because their product is used to smelt the ore in the blast furnaces; the foundrymen, the moulders, the iron workers and the metal polishers, because it is their labor that transforms the raw material into marketable form; the railway carmen and the switchmen, because it is they who load for shipment the finished products of the mill. Twenty-four unions, with an aggregate membership of a million five hundred thousand workmen, reaching into every intricate branch of the great industry, are associated in the new alliance for the unionization of the steel plants.

Obviously this method of federation has nothing in common with the craft unionism, the separate organization of differently trained groups of skilled workmen, that has so steadily been taught by the leaders of the American Federation of Labor. It is industrial unionism, resembling in some ways the type of organization heretofore advocated in the United States only by the syndicalists. And at Pittsburgh, and the meetings preliminary to it, the co-operating unions in the new alliance have made substantial sacrifices—for the sake of this industrial unionism. They have agreed upon practically uniform admission fees; in the past those fees have varied widely, and been a matter of jealously-guarded individuality. They have put the new fees within reach of the unskilled workers—of whose interests organized American labor has never been particularly conscious. And they have agreed in asking the National Organization Committee to report upon the feasibility of establishing a uniform wage scale throughout the entire industry—a proposal which would not even have been debated, a few years ago.

Ostensibly all of the steps which these twenty-four American unions have taken in the direction of industrial organization have come as temporary measures. Each innovation has been adopted as part of a strategy for the achievement of a specific object. But whether they will in the end turn out to be temporary is a different matter. The alliance has already had considerable success in the steel plants of Illinois and Ohio. After a short campaign it has gone farther, in the furnaces and rolling mills of South Chicago, Gary and Youngstown, than union labor has ever been able to go before. The plants of Pennsylvania offer a more difficult task. There the power of the great companies is most secure. And in many cases a municipal administration supports the opposition of the companies by prohibiting the right of free assemblage and the use of orderly methods of agitation.

But if the alliance should be successful in carrying organization into the steel plants of Pennsylvania, if it should be no more successful than it has already been in the plants of Illinois and Ohio, then the present use of the industrial type of organization will leave an influence by no means temporary upon the future course of American unionism. The same methods will be adopted by the workers in other industries, to cope with equally reactionary employers. From these tactics will come a certain breaking down of the barriers between crafts, and a new opportunity for the unskilled worker to participate in the benefits of organization. For the first time a number of important American trade unions have genuinely set aside their differences as miners and seamen and electricians, and pooled their interests in a common venture as producers. This is an undertaking too large not to leave a permanent effect, if in the present instance it is successful.

Though the essential issue raised by the Pittsburgh conference is this possible shift toward some form of industrial unionism, there are one or two corollaries of the meeting that will perhaps be of interest to British readers. For one thing, it seems possible that the conference will have an effect on the future leadership of organized American labor.

This is not the place to discuss reasons for the control which Mr. Gompers has so long exercised over American trade unionism. But this much may be said: The task of bringing twenty-four independent unions into the

present alliance may turn out to be the greatest feat in the recent record of the labor movement; and the achievement of that task is the work of the one most prominent liberal group inside the American Federation of Labor. A desire to overthrow the existing leadership has not been their motive. But it is certain that with the rank and file of American labor the prestige of this liberal group is rising. It is not possible to say that the leadership of Mr. Gompers has in any way been challenged. But at least one reason for the continued control of Mr. Gompers has been the absence of any liberal group within the Federation to offer an alternative to his rule. For the first time in several years such a group is now coming into prominence.

There is another implication of the Pittsburgh conference, and that lies in the effect it may have on the projection of a national labor party into American politics. Stand-pat leaders of American labor have often said that only those who have failed at trade union organization now advocate organization as a political party. It happens that the group chiefly responsible for the alliance of the twenty-four trade unions is also the group most active in establishing the first of our state labor parties—the Labor Party of Illinois. It is certain that from this fact many trade unionists will draw a conclusion favorable to the formation of a national party. In America we think that the establishment of such a party is now essential to the liberalization of our politics.—Yours, &c.,

CHARLES MERZ.

Communications.

UNREST IN FRANCE.

To the Editor of THE NATION.

SIR,—The general strike of miners in France seems near settlement, the Government having capitulated on the question of the calculation of the hours of labor under the eight hours law. The original measure, as introduced by M. Durafour, arranged matters so as to provide for six hours fifty minutes of actual work in the mines, but M. Loucheur on behalf of the Government induced the Chamber to amend it in a sense opposed to the demands of the miners. The strike was the result, and on June 20th, when the Bill returned from the Senate, M. Loucheur proposed the restoration of the original text, which the Chamber voted unanimously. It seems hardly wise on the part of the Government to give so convincing an example of the value of direct action. At the beginning of the week the strike of the metal-workers in the department of the Seine, which had lasted three weeks, seemed also in a fair way of being settled, for negotiations had begun with the employers; but on Monday the Executive of the Metal Workers' Federation decided to convene a meeting of the "Cartel" (the French equivalent of the Triple Alliance) for the purpose of organizing a general strike for political objects.

Although the recent strikes had primarily professional objects, such as the raising of wages and the reduction of hours, they soon developed into movements of a revolutionary character. Like most strikes nowadays, both in France and England, they were spontaneous movements on the part of the rank and file and in many cases took the Trade Union officials by surprise. Their revolutionary development has led to a misunderstanding between the Executive of the C.G.T. (General Confederation of Labor) and the rank and file, which was frankly dealt with in "L'Humanité" last Saturday by M. Dumoulin, one of the delegates of the C.G.T. to the Southport Conference, who described the misunderstanding as "grave." The strikers or some of them wanted the C.G.T. to convert the movement into a general revolutionary strike and the C.G.T., having refused to do so, is being vehemently denounced. In the article already mentioned M. Dumoulin said that the Unions that now demand a revolutionary strike did not tell the C.G.T. that they had any such intention and, had they done so, they would have been asked to wait; they said, on the contrary, that they were striking for purely professional and sectional objects.

The C.G.T. could not, M. Dumoulin said, allow individual Unions, however powerful, to precipitate a general strike or allow itself to be blinded by spontaneous impatience and irritation; it must await the right moment for effective action.

This is sound sense, but the danger is that the spontaneous impatience and irritation of the rank and file may become irresistible, and that the C.G.T. may lose control of the movement. It is impossible not to feel grave anxiety about the present situation in France. A spontaneous revolutionary movement precipitated without adequate organization or even clear aims might end in nothing but futile violence. The French have always been extremely, even excessively, patient up to a certain point, at which the situation has become unendurable and they have broken out and smashed everything. The breaking-point seems to be very nearly reached at present. Some fifteen months ago I was talking in Paris about the feeling of the workmen to a distinguished man who had been director of a State munition factory during the greater part of the war. He said that the workmen were even then in a state bordering on exasperation, and that there was only one Trade Union leader in whom they still had confidence, because he had always been opposed to the war; but, he added, "il sera débordé." That prophecy, which was far from being the child of a wish, seems near fulfilment. The exasperation of the rank and file is now such that only the exercise of qualities of statesmanship can prevent all the Trade Union leaders from being overwhelmed, and it is not at all certain that, if a revolutionary movement began without their consent and were successful, those who had begun it would be capable of organizing the new social conditions. The crisis may produce the men, but at present they are not in evidence, and that is perhaps one reason why the C.G.T. is prudent.

The great war magnates of industry have, as M. Francis Delaisi said in the "Manchester Guardian" on May 15th, "succeeded in putting one of their number, the most active and the most intelligent, at the head of the Ministry charged with controlling them." Perhaps M. Clemenceau thought that it might answer to set a profiteer to catch a profiteer, but at present the experiment has been more fortunate for the war magnates of industry than for the country. The business-politician in question is M. Loucheur, Minister of Reconstruction, and he has original ideas about reconstruction. He is no longer satisfied with import duties; his policy is to close the French market to all imports other than raw materials in the most restricted sense of the term—*matières brutes*, as distinguished from *matières premières* in the wide sense. This policy has now been partially modified, but the modification is neutralized by the imposition on the articles allowed to be imported of *ad valorem* import duties in addition to the existing duties by weight. The excuse given for this policy is the necessity of maintaining the rate of exchange. But the French critics of M. Loucheur point to his interests in a large number of industrial enterprises, and to the fortune he has made out of the war. And the refusal of the Government to allow anybody in France to buy motor-cars from the American Army, with the result that a few thousand have already been destroyed, as it was impossible to transport them to America, must make clear to every Frenchman what the interests are that his Government exists to defend. Moreover, when after the Armistice the price of paper began to fall, M. Loucheur fixed by decree minimum prices above the market value because the French paper trust had large stocks in hand. Thus, with everything at famine prices, the interests of the country are being sacrificed to those of a few profiteers. Well might the C.G.T., in a recent manifesto, denounce the closing of the frontiers as one of the chief causes of dear living. The French manufacturers are not in a position to supply the consumers with the articles whose importation is prohibited, but the consumers must wait until they can. Meanwhile everything grows more and more scarce and prices rise accordingly. To be sure, it is only Protectionism carried to its logical conclusion.

The French capitalists, not content with exploiting the consumer, obstinately refuse to pay their fair share of the cost of the war. The national expenditure is being met to a large extent by the issue of forced paper currency; a further issue of £160,000,000 has just been authorized, which brings the total up to £1,600,000,000, of which the sum of

£1,080,000,000 is a loan from the Bank of France to the State. A month ago the Bank of France had a gold and silver reserve of only £234,000,000. In these circumstances the depreciation of the currency is not surprising. In August, 1917, the total value of bank-notes in circulation was only £480,000,000, so that there has been an issue of £1,120,000,000 in the course of twenty-two months, chiefly as a desperate expedient for making both ends meet in the Budget. M. Klotz has the honor of having inaugurated this method of finance. Obviously fresh taxation was necessary, especially as there are unredeemed War Bonds ("Bons de la Défense Nationale") to the value of nearly a thousand million sterling; they are repayable three, six, or twelve months after issue, and, if the Government were suddenly called upon to repay any large proportion of them, it would not have the means of doing so. This fresh taxation is being demanded, not from the profiteers, from the great financial and industrial magnates, or from the wealthy *rentiers*, but from the consumer. More indirect taxation to make the cost of living still higher is M. Klotz's solution, and a docile Parliament has accepted it. Yet the highest rate of income-tax in France is only 20 per cent., and even that is not payable on the whole of the largest incomes.

Is it surprising that there is discontent and unrest in a country thus treated by its rulers? M. André Tardieu, a few days ago, tried to reassure public opinion by detailing the mineral wealth that had accrued to France by the annexation of Alsace-Lorraine. But that mineral wealth is private property, and will not benefit the French workman, whose wages have not increased 292 per cent. since 1910, like the cost of living. If the French bourgeoisie wishes to avert a revolution it must make sacrifices. No voice has been raised in the middle-class press, save only in "L'Œuvre," to warn the bourgeoisie of the abyss towards which it is marching. Yet nothing but drastic measures to relieve indirect taxation and reduce the cost of living may avert catastrophe. Perhaps it is hoped that attention will be diverted by peace rejoicings. It may be, for a few days, or even a few weeks, but the claims of the stomach will again make themselves heard. The disappearance of M. Clemenceau would not mend matters unless there were a complete change of policy, and no such change is possible unless the bourgeoisie will consent to it. Is it that the French middle class, after ruling France for a century, is committing suicide as surely as did the noblesse of the eighteenth century? Is there in France a man able and willing to awaken it to the realities of the situation?—Yours, &c.,

ROBERT DELL.

Letters to the Editor.

THE SINKING OF THE GERMAN FLEET.

SIR,—The sinking of the German Fleet disposes of the somewhat delicate matter as to what should be done with it. But it does something infinitely more important: it opens up the way to disarmament all round.

The objection to disarmament in the minds of most people has always been the fear of "the other fellow." The German Fleet, for instance, was regarded in this country as the greatest menace to the peace of Europe. Now the German Fleet has gone, and its going has not added to the strength of any other navy. With a League of Nations anxious to give effect to Mr. Wilson's desire for disarmament, as expressed in Article 8 of the Covenant, what is there to prevent the other nations following the example of the German sailors? Against whom is the British Fleet to be used now that the German Fleet has ceased to exist? Surely not France, or America, or any of our present Allies. Then why not seize the present opportunity to show the people of the world that when we talk about disarmament we really mean what we say?—Yours, &c.,

W. J. CHAMBERLAIN.

66, Bournville Lane, Birmingham.
June 24th, 1919.

RECONSTRUCTION AND TUBERCULOUS SCHOOL CHILDREN.

SIR,—Now that we have a Ministry of Health, and there is a general consensus of opinion that no effort must be spared to raise what Mr. Lloyd George has called our C3 nation to an A1 standard, will you kindly allow me to draw the attention of your readers to the case—the very pressing case—of the tens of thousands of children who are to be found in the class-rooms of our elementary schools suffering from tuberculosis, a curable, often infectious, disease so frequently concomitant of poverty and overcrowding?

In 1911 Mr. Runciman, the then Minister of Education, in moving the Education Estimates, stated that 1 to 4 per cent. of the children in our elementary schools suffered from tuberculosis "easily recognizable"; significant words which, seeing that we have in our elementary schools 6,000,000 children, mean that there are at least 60,000 children victims of the "White Scourge" in the schools, often not only becoming worse themselves, but being a source of infection to healthy children.

The report of the Inter-Departmental Committee on Physical Deterioration, published in 1905, caused widespread uneasiness, and the campaign which had for some years prior been carried on in Labor and Socialist circles for improving the physique of the children became even more energetic. Lectures were delivered in various parts of the country. I myself took part in the campaign, and emphasized the necessity for a system of scientifically organized Open-Air Recovery Schools for consumptive school children. In 1907, at my suggestion, the Woolwich Co-operators offered their beautiful recreation ground in Bostal Woods to the L.C.C. for purposes of an experiment as an Open-air Recovery School for some 120 children. The experiment, although conducted by the L.C.C. on by no means liberal lines, was deemed a success, and many hoped that this would be the beginning of a great movement on behalf of the consumptive children. Alas! there are in London to-day only two such schools, with a total accommodation for some 220 children—this, too, although, seeing that in London there are 600,000 to 700,000 children in elementary schools, there should, on the basis of 1 per cent. of those children suffering from tuberculosis "easily recognizable," be Open-air Recovery Schools for at least 6,000 children. The same inadequacy of such schools prevails all over the country.

The agitation was carried on steadily, especially in the industrial centres, and a demand for a system of scientifically organized Open-air Recovery Schools was included in the comprehensive constructive education programme, which for many years prior to the war constituted the official education policy of the Trades Union Congress.

I submit that this a matter which brooks of no delay, and surely it is not too much to hope that the time is not far distant when there will not be found in any class-room in London schools, or indeed in any school in the country, one child who has been certified by the school doctors as requiring treatment—or tuberculosis.

The matter should be taken in hand in a generous spirit, so that the best that medical science has taught us can be done for the cure of consumption may be brought to bear on the task of *preventing* the spread of the White Scourge among the children of the working-class population.

Needless to say, the sites chosen for such schools should be healthy and away from slums. The children could be "collected" from their homes in the early morning in motor-buses, "lorribuses," &c., and taken back in the evening. A generous diet should be provided for the children, and lessons should be given in the open air when fine and under shelters in rainy weather. The teachers should be especially trained for the purpose, and the children should be under the observation of the school doctors.

I am sure there are among your readers many who will be glad to help in forming the strong body of public opinion which will so strengthen the hands of Dr. Addison that he may bring on bear on the Board of Education the pressure necessary to secure this much needed reform.—Yours, &c.,

M. BRIDGES ADAMS.

London. June 22nd, 1919.

"RESCUE THE PERISHING."

SIR,—In connection with the blockade of Germany, Miss Jebb suggests in your columns that we, as a nation, think other objects more important than the feeding of children. And she is disappointed that the Christian Church does not protest against that view. It may be that Christian men and women remember the words of their Master: "Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul, but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell." It is possible to take too materialistic a view even of the welfare of children. Conscientious objectors and their friends may also find instruction in these words.—Yours, &c.,

MOTHER.

[It is worth while pointing out to "Mother" that our laws ordain that parents who, it may be claimed, take a spiritual view of the feeding of children, are liable to get penal servitude for it.—ED., NATION.]

STATE PURCHASE OF MINING ROYALTIES.

SIR,—The Report of the Coal Commission brings us at last to close quarters with a fundamental juristic problem, which, if economic legislation is to proceed in future on clear lines, will have to be settled, once and for all, not as a side issue, by a Commission appointed to deal with a single industry, but by Parliament, after the fullest consideration. I refer to the question whether land can be deemed private property in the same sense as goods and chattels, or whether the nation has an overriding ownership over it, and if so, in what ways this is to be given effect to.

Recent Governments have shown by their legislation that, whether consciously or not, they have already accepted the latter alternative. The town-planning legislation, the undeveloped land tax, and the recent war controls of agriculture have all curtailed the power of the landowner "to do as he likes with his own." But the growing opinion on this subject is not likely to stop short at this measure of State control. The State cannot exercise effective control while it permits private ownership in perpetuity. The earth, the air, and the water are nature's gifts to all, and should belong to the community, private ownership only applying to the fruits of a man's own labor.

This fundamental difference in the ownership of land and chattels appears to have been brought to the notice of the Coal Commission, if at all, in a very imperfect manner; one report, that of the coal-owners, declaring that they see no difference between the two kinds of property. The result is that all the members of the Commission, except the three miners' representatives, pronounce in favor of the purchase of the royalties by the State, practically at their full capital value. This means that the taxpayers of the country will have to buy back their own patrimony, ignorantly and improvidently alienated in perpetuity by their past rulers. This transaction will form a precedent for a much larger one, compelling the State, if it hereafter should adopt the policy of land nationalization, to pay the full capital value of the unimproved site.

Had Mr. Smillie, instead of troubling over land laws, which were passed before the community, as such, was recognized to have any rights whatever, endeavored to elicit from the aristocratic royalty owners what sums they had paid centuries ago for the mines, and what return they have received from them since, we should probably have found that they had received back their capital and interest over and over again. Now nobody can, or indeed does, expect to hold a profit-earning investment for ever and ever, and the State would commit no injustice if it resumed the royalties at once, only compensating those owners who proved that they had not already received back their purchase money and reasonable interest. But if the State, having regard to the tardiness with which it has chosen to assert its rights, desires to be generous, it should limit the compensation to a life interest in the royalties which the owner already receives.

As this proposal brings all believers in land nationalization, in whatever form, to the parting of the ways, I trust it will receive the most searching criticism.—Yours, &c.,

E. J. H.

London. June 24th, 1919.

NATIVE RACES AND COLONIAL MANDATES.

SIR,—We beg to be allowed to submit to the public, through the columns of your journal a serious position which has arisen with regard to the late German Colonies.

Our Committee early realized that any attempt to dispose of these territories against the wishes of the inhabitants would lead to war or migration, possibly to both. Apparently His Majesty's Government reached a similar conclusion, for in the clearest terms possible, and in the most categorical manner, Mr. Lloyd George pledged Great Britain to a policy of reference to tribal Councils before a final decision as to the political future of these territories. This pledge of the British Prime Minister has become a word of honor to millions of Africans, for the principle involved affected the African race as a whole.

We understand that there is now very little prospect of this pledge being redeemed, and we believe the British public will deplore the fact that the enlightened and progressive lead given by Great Britain in a matter upon which she is so competent to advise, has been set aside. This is the more to be deplored because already, according to reliable information, serious disaffection and unrest exists, whilst migration has begun in more than one area.

If there is still no hope that the Peace Conference will honor the British pledge, then it is imperative that the Colonial Mandates must be so drawn that they will remove from the native mind any apprehension upon the real nature of the rights conferred upon individual Powers by the League of Nations. Those rights must rest, we submit, upon a trusteeship to be conferred by the League of Nations, incorporated in an Administrative Charter providing the fullest protection for native rights in land and labor.—Yours, &c.

JOHN H. HARRIS, Organizing Sec.
TRAVERS BUXTON, Secretary.

Anti-Slavery and Aborigines Protection Society.

June 12th, 1919.

"IF YOU WISH PEACE . . ."

SIR,—That old fallacy, "Si vis pacem, para bellum," seems still to have considerable influence in certain quarters. Perhaps the following extract from a lecture delivered by Major-General Frederick B. Maurice in the Carnegie Hall, New York, and reported in the New York "Times" of April 5th, may help to kill it:—

"As a soldier who has spent a quarter of his life in the study of the science of arms, let me tell you I went into the British Army believing that if you want peace, you must prepare for war. I believe now that if you prepare thoroughly and efficiently for war, you get war."

Such an opinion, coming from the late Director of Military Operations on the British General Staff, is surely a strong argument in favor of complete disarmament.—Yours, &c.,

E. EVELYN ASHBY.

Holland House, Woodbrooke, Birmingham.

MR. WILSON.

SIR,—I don't believe in kicking a man when he's down, but in the interest of truth I suggest that your apology for President Wilson goes too far. By all means let us blame those who failed to support his policy, let us admit that the task of sticking to his avowed principles was extraordinarily difficult, but had the American President been the modern Abraham Lincoln which his admirers claimed him to be he would have overcome these difficulties.

You say, for instance, "he was beaten in the first round in his stand for publicity at the Conference." He was only beaten because he gave way. No power on earth could have prevented him from publishing the negotiations if he had so chosen. Of course, it may be said that publicity would have been a mistake, but if so, the first of his fourteen points, "open covenants openly arrived at," was a vain and foolish promise. Then as to the failure to support his programme in America, is it not true that the expression of Liberal opinion in that country had been deliberately suppressed

for a long time by the Government which he himself controlled?

Viewed in the light of the fourteen points the actual terms of peace are a jest. We may pity the President for being confronted with a task beyond his power. But unless we deny to men the possibility of heroic action we cannot condone his complete betrayal of ideals or the breach of his plighted word.—Yours, &c.,

F. W. PETHICK LAWRENCE.

11, Old Square, Lincoln's Inn, W.C. 2

AN ALLIANCE OF EMPLOYERS AND EMPLOYED.

SIR,—In your issue of the 24th May, you refer to the activities of several organizations which operate under "attractive titles such as the National Alliance of Employers and Employed." There would appear to be a lack of a clear conception of the true aim of this organization in particular and a belief that it is an attempt to break the solidarity of Labor.

This is far from being the case. The National Alliance is an Alliance of organizations—Employers' Associations, Trade Unions and Firms. It stands for "every worker in his Trade Union and every employer in his Association." It refuses to touch questions which are the matters for negotiation between the Association and the Union, and seeks to add to the status and authority of both, bringing about mutual action upon the broader questions which concern the prosperity of Industry and the well-being of the Industrial workers—short—the Commonweal.

It is now generally admitted that the Industrial organization of the past which has led to an inequitable distribution of the results of production—by introducing the anomalies and injustices which have led up to the present antagonisms between classes and interests—imperils the stability of a system upon which modern society is built. This has been due to haphazard growth of industry, without a central or national aim, and a co-ordinating factor.

The Alliance is the prototype of that co-ordinating factor, the only element which can secure a peaceful transition from the old to the new Industrialism.

It has produced a scheme for re-organization of Industry which is developing on a large scale—complementing and assisting in every way the interests of the Trade Union and the Employers' Association, with a view to finding the *via media* for a peaceful advance in mutual prosperity and well-being.

The unit is the Area Committee which comprises the elected delegates of the organizations concerned, each side in equal numbers, representing *all* industries in the district. In every case it is established with the consent and support of all bodies concerned. Twenty-five of these Committees—each covering a large area (*e.g.*, three covering the whole county of Nottingham)—have now been set in motion, and others are in process of formation.

The basis of much of our industrial unrest is the appalling housing conditions of the workers, and this problem has been, and is being, attacked by these Area Committees; the utmost effort urged upon the local authorities and the promotion of Public Utility Societies to meet the additional needs.

It is impossible to give a full account of such a large national movement in a brief letter. It must suffice if I add that the Alliance urged upon the Government for nearly a year the need for a National Industrial Conference, and by its propaganda and activities made such a Conference possible. In three instances the Area Committees have arbitrated and prevented strikes, at the request of the parties concerned in the dispute, after all *existing* machinery had broken down, and, in one case, it was done three days before the Government arbitrators arrived.—Yours, &c.,

T. ERNEST JACKSON, Labor Organizer.

National Alliance of Employers and Employed,

64, Victoria Street, London, S.W. 1.

May 29th, 1919.

Poetry.

LOVERS AND GHOSTS.

IN the still hour we whisper of strange ghosts,
Consort with our dead peers, call up the hosts
Of lovers where bright petals slowly fell
In secret gardens, delicate miracle
Unmarked of men. No story has been told
Of what they did of fragrance rare unfold
In lingering airs blown by the rushing wind
Of heedless multitudes, who being blind
And one in blindness, have their history.

But these have none: what legend shall there be
Of these our brothers? Or shall we unbind
The hidden knowledge of a lover's mind?
Set once again the whispered perfume free?
Shake the dim branches of the fruited tree
That grows within the garden of our soul?
Or give the dull-tongued world to drink the bowl
Of the sweet vintage which ourselves did press
Untaught of unbelieving happiness?

No, let the ghosts of lovers drink with us
Who have no need of speech superfluous.
In their eyes we are worthy; they in ours:
For they have known the magic of such hours
As we know when the future droops her wings
About our nestled heads and murmurs things
Beyond our knowledge and out-topping hope,
And yet within some unimpeded scope
Of the soul's certainty.

For she doth pledge
That when we reach the sheer unfathomed edge
Of joy, surrendered in the sign
Of union with the unalloyed divine
Each of the other, in the perfect end
Of all our deep desire, she will defend
The loveliness of our mortality
Against the death that waits it. We'll not be
Mere silver echoes of our voices sounding
As sweetly from the past as the surrounding
Laughter of ghostly lovers now doth fall.
This should be much; yet this shall not be all
And, being less than all, it counts for naught
Beside the tremulous promise of one wrought
In our own image, but from elements
Less fair than love sublimed, the quintessence
Of that diviner fragrance which I bear
Sealed in the phial of a heart proved rare
Only by that thou chocest it to fill,
And into it such sweetness didst distil
That they themselves believe not who do say:
—A lover he? Made of our common clay.

The clay is common, but the scent which clings
Calls back to them their child-imaginings,
Music half-heard of more than common things,
Even as it calls them back to me who grope
Through them to some unconquerable hope
Of comprehending from what royalty
I fell, and thou dost stoop to where I lie.
Not in our image therefore, but in thine.
Through thee I touch the fringe of the divine
Remembered purple, which that other thou
And his child's children shall one day allow
Mine wholly, undiminished; they shall be
Witness to my forgotten majesty,
To all eyes manifest the sons of kings.

This doth the future pledge us; to these things
We pledge the company of ghosts, who drink
Knowing themselves once more upon the brink
Of reborn love in this conspiracy
Which laughs at time, and grasps eternity.

HENRY KING.

The World of Books.

THE "NATION" OFFICE, THURSDAY NIGHT.

THE following is our weekly selection of books which we commend to the notice of our readers:—

- "History of Germany in the XIXth Century." Vol. VI. By Heinrich V. Treitschke. Translated by Eden and Cedar Paul. (Jarrolds. 15s.)
- "Byways in Southern Tuscany." Illustrated. By Katharine Hooker. (Fisher Unwin. 18s.)
- "The Four Horsemen." A Novel. Translated from the Spanish of V. B. Ibañez by Charlotte Brewster Jordan. (Constable. 6s.)

* * *

THIS month has seen the bi-centenary of Addison, and since he married a Countess, was a Secretary of State, a man-about-town, a journalist, and (in addition) a man of no small literary notoriety, he is well worth discussion. Addison was not by any means the first of our journalists, or even essayists, but he was the first of any real social and political influence, and so the legitimate father of modern journalism. Therefore, to put him into one of the niches of the literary cathedral and there leave him is to see him only with the eyes of the text-book. Here he becomes a literary problem that takes very little solving. We all know what we ought to say about his prose. It is the model of gentlemanliness, urbanity, and reasonableness. It is decorous, complacent, and discreet, in such a way as to show how finished and balanced he was as a stylist, and how very towny and limited as a person.

* * *

HAD he been a man of a real philosophy of life, or of a catholic humanity, or of strong feeling, or of keen vision, his style would have suffered and been a less mature and disciplined instrument of what he had to say about life. As a critic, he was the only Augustan to appreciate Milton and to read Shakespeare, untutored by Aristotle. As a satirist, he is his own critic:—

"I did not design so much to expose vice as idleness, and aimed at those persons who pass away their time rather in trifles and impertinence than in crimes and immorality. Offences of the latter kind are not to be dallied with and treated in so ludicrous a manner. In short, my journal only holds up folly to the light, and shows the disagreeableness of such actions as are indifferent in themselves and blameworthy only as they proceed from creatures endowed with reason."

He was both a prig and an egoist and wrote like this upon human suffering:—

"When we read of torments, wounds, death and the like dismal accidents, our pleasure does not flow so properly from the grief which such melancholy descriptions give us, as from the secret comparison which we make between ourselves and the person who suffers. Such representations teach us to set a just value upon our own condition, and make us prize our good fortune, which exempts us from the like calamities."

It is a half-truth, and the sort of cold-hearted pomposity of which Steele (a greater and sweeter personality, if a lesser stylist) could never have been guilty. Even though Addison never came down out of the pulpit where he loved to wag a gentle finger, and regarded morality (eighteenth century morality) as the employer of art, he was without the strong conviction of the moralist. So, though he could be didactic enough, yet he possessed a consummate art of making his genteel and orthodox view of life persuasive and palatable to his readers' taste.

* * *

To Addison, and indeed to all his circle, literature was an amenity, the best and proper accomplishment of a well-educated and prosperous man who knew his way about on pavements. The only extraordinary thing about this

coherent and methodical artist is that with a mind so mediocre, so devoid of ideas and often so prejudiced, he could yet bring the expression of his little microcosm to so delicate a pitch of perfection. All this is obvious enough and, like other truisms, partial and not altogether fair. For Addison was not an essayist at all, but an occasional journalist. The essay is a soliloquy; and not in the faintest degree a public building or a form of social literature. What Addison really did was to take over from Steele—and see in it that which the inventor did not—a method of written communication which should bring him hot-foot from the Press every morning to the breakfast tables of his audience. He says so himself: "I have brought philosophy out of closets and libraries, schools and colleges, to dwell in clubs and assemblies, at tea-tables and in coffee-houses." And the Queen Anne period, narrow, precise and materialist as it was, devoured to the last mouthful what its arbiter of elegance served up for it, simply because it had a representative culture. Elizabethan literature was part of the adventure of life; the seventeenth century was chaotic and transitional; the writers of the Romantic Revival wrote for individuals, and our own has to cater for cliques, for the business man, and for a mass of people who have learned how to read but not what to read. But the well-off security of the Augustan age created just those shallow, lucid, and scrupulous standards and judgment that Addison wanted. It was ready to be diverted, but there must be no bitterness in the draught; it was accessible to sermons, so long as they were not "barbarous," dull, or drastic; it wanted an amiable, discursive, tolerant, and domesticated literature; good material for coffee-house talk; it wanted an excellent debating society, and the benignant, patriarchal Addison and the more human and sprightly Steele were just the presidents to suit its humor.

* * *

THUS, when Addison is cut to his social cloth, his real meaning and significance begin to emerge. His inspiration was not to be a genius with internal resources, but to have an educated public at his back. When he sat down to write a "Tatler," or "Spectator," or "Guardian" number, he asked himself (not consciously, of course) not how good he could make it, but how it would go down with his audience. Their good sense and distinction and primness and Hyde Parkishness were his, and as he served them, so they served him. For the need of interesting those readers and keeping them interested several times a week over a period of years kept his faculties well pointed. Steele, with a more alert and sensitive mind, could spin his liveliness into theology. But Addison had a square, phlegmatic temperament and needed the critical spur to keep him braced. Otherwise, he might well have been dull; as a journalist he could not afford to be. Then, too, his solid and conservative virtues made his gossip weighty and sensible and cleaned out of it all the frippery and "chattiness" ("levity" he would have called it) which infest modern daily journalism.

* * *

NEED one compare Addison's journalism with the daily journalism of to-day? Granted that he was a man who created a system; to-day it is the profitable system which fashions the man. Addison was the arbiter of an educated age; the system, levelling all types of expression, is the deliberately illiberal arbiter of ours. When we consider our peculiar compound of cowardice and truculence, and note the marvellously base kind of expression it finds, we shall not need to labor the comparison with a style which has survived as a model of English prose idiom—the style of a humdrum journalist, catering for the fashionable and average thought of ten thousand readers.

H. J. M.

Reviews.

MR. YEATS IN PROSE.

"The Cutting of an Agate." By W. B. YEATS. (Macmillan. 6s. net.)

MR. YEATS is a poet whom it would not be easy to over-praise among contemporary men of genius. He is a poet, however, who finds himself in difficulties as soon as he takes to prose. He knows how to fly, but he does not know how to walk. He is as sure as a swift on the wing—as uneasy as a swift on foot. We can think of no other poet whose prose so ill expresses the airy perfection of his genius. It is as though in poetic exaltation alone he could find release from the awkward sort of self-consciousness. Poetry makes the poet drunken, and endows him at once with ease and wildness. Prose is in comparison the sober man's speech. We demand in it an orderliness of thought, a constant recurrence to common sense, a capacity to turn the shafts of a critical sense of humour, and we account no prose entirely great that lacks any of these three qualities. The greatest prose may be without humour, as many passages in the Bible may be called in to prove, but it must not violate the sense of humor. Great prose is never ridiculous, even when we do not understand it. Mr. Yeats's prose, unfortunately, is often ridiculous. It is not in the tradition of the perfect statements of the world's wisdom. It is in the tradition, rather, of the fashionable statements of the æsthetic point of view of the later part of the nineteenth century. This is neither wine from an immortal cask nor water from a clear spring. It is a kind of medicated port that offends almost equally against a subtle taste in wine and a subtle taste in water. Mr. Yeats may protest that he offers it to us neither as wine nor as water, but as medicine. He is anxious to cure us of the disease of commonness. We cannot help resenting this half-wine, however. It may be partly because we resent the suggestion that we are ill. We resent still more, however, being asked to drink wine that does not taste like wine, or medicine in too sweet a disguise.

At times we are even left in doubt whether Mr. Yeats would rather cure or poison us. Does he really like us enough to want to cure us? Would he not, on the whole, prefer to exterminate us, because we belong to the middle classes and read newspapers? In an occasional passage he seems to claim kinship with ordinary human beings. "I love all the arts," he declares, "that can still remind me of their origin among the common people." On the other hand, in the same chapter that contains this sentence, he brushes the common world aside and announces that "in the studio and in the drawing-room we can find a true theatre of beauty." His conception of art is essentially aristocratic. The humorous and realistic passages in the Elizabethan drama, he thinks, were written at the outset "to please the common citizen standing on the rushes of the floor." The great speeches, however, "were written by poets who remembered their patrons in the covered galleries." Now, there is a sense in which this is partly true. Literature is written for those who have enough education and leisure to enjoy it. Few poets or prose-writers have ever written in the hope that they will be read by the family grocer and the cook. One might as well offer these people Greek as poetry. That, however, is not the fault of the cook and the family grocer. It is the fault of those of us who acquiesce in the present order of society. If the cook and the grocer are indifferent to poetry, it is because the drawing-rooms so generously praised by Mr. Yeats have brought them up in this indifference. Literature is simply the tradition of fine thought and fine speech. It is a tradition with no necessary connection with high birth or jewels. We have no reason to believe that Shakespeare was born in a palace. He became a servant of the tradition from a middle-class home. We hold that the greater number of human beings can be gathered up into the tradition of literature and become accustomed to its atmosphere and speech as soon as society opens the boundless possibilities of knowledge and taste to all the citizens. Mr. Yeats, apparently, doubts this. At any rate, he will have no dealings with the social reformers who would give the grocers a chance. He believes that the average citizen is doomed by his very averageness. He is out of sympathy with

common hopes and fears, and regards literature as the preserve of those who are emancipated from them. He would find an audience for the arts among those who, in the Nietzschean phrase, live dangerously. Writing before the war, he did not realize that the spread of the habit of living dangerously would increase the circulation of "John Bull," and make Lord Northcliffe a dictator. Lamenting the decay of tragic literature in those days, he wrote: "Poetical tragedy, and, indeed, all the more intense forms of literature, had lost their hold on the general mass of men in other countries as life grew safe, and the sense of comedy which is the social bond in times of peace, as tragic feeling is in times of war, had become the inspiration of popular art." Well, we have had a war—"some" war, as the Americans say—lasting between four and five years. How does Mr. Yeats's aristocratic and Nietzschean theory stand the test of experience? Did we suddenly find the theatres crowded for revivals of Shakespeare and Euripides? Did the writers of our own day abandon comedy and propaganda for the nobler tragic forms? On the contrary. The King performed a symbolic act when he conferred the C.B.E., not on Mr. Joseph Conrad, but on Mr. George Robey. What men flocked to at the theatres during the era of dangerous living was for the most part revues with names such as "The Bing Boys Are Here," "Bubbly," and "The Better 'Ole." We believe that Mr. Yeats's theory of the perils of safety and the beauties of danger has been utterly disproved by the event. But it ought not to have needed a European war to disprove it. He should have known that the Athenian tragedy came to birth in the safest city in ancient Greece—the city in which men first discarded the sword from their daily dress. He should have known that the Elizabethan tragedy came to birth, not during the insecurity of the Wars of the Roses, but when the strong hand of the Tudor had made London more or less safe for autocracy. It would clearly be easy enough to make out a case on either side of this argument. No country has ever been entirely safe or entirely unsafe, and so the argument must rest on estimates and comparisons that leave considerable room for difference of opinion. Still, we cannot feel that Mr. Yeats has made out even a *prima facie* case for his Nietzschean theory of the arts. All artists, save a few eccentrics, will agree with him as to the necessity of tradition and the necessity of the courage that gives the free mind. But this does not mean that everybody will be willing to follow him into dangerous drawing-rooms as the last refuge of the arts.

The truth is, Mr. Yeats writes as often from prejudice as from thought. His attitude is to some extent that of a sectarian. He would cut off artists from their fellow-men in a sect as exclusive as the Plymouth Brethren. He divides men too readily into the sheep and the goats. He tells us of the artist, for instance, that "he has at all times the freedom of the well-bred, and being bred to the tact of words can take what theme he pleases, unlike the linen drapers, who are rightly compelled to be very strict in their conversation." Why all this buffeting of linen-draperies, who, after all, can talk bawdry as well as the artist? Scorn of the bourgeois is probably an occasional passion in nearly all artists, but Mr. Yeats makes a habit of it. He could have made all his points about the necessity of style without cruelty to shopkeepers. His praise of style—of "technical sincerity"—indeed, would have made more impression on the age, had he not despised the age. Style, he declares, is "but high breeding in words and argument. . . . It is the playing of strength when the day's work is done, a secret between a craftsman and his work, and is so inseparable in his nature that he has it most of all amid overwhelming emotion, and in the face of death." That is finely said, and Mr. Yeats's essays and notes are full of things finely said. His *obiter dicta* on art, however, win our curiosity oftener than our agreement. Only those will agree with the majority of them who accept Mr. Yeats's view of the ideal life as a grave and labored pantomime. He is an æsthete, and his æstheticism is constantly leading him into exaggerations that are in conflict with common sense. He mourns, for instance, over a girl who had learned history and geography, but walked and talked badly. This makes him long to see a "wise theatre established which might make a training in strong and beautiful life the fashion, teaching before all else the heroic discipline of the looking-glass." He is fond of interpreting beauty as a sort of vanity. He uses such

phrases as "When we go to the gymnasium to be shaped for woman's eyes." He loves masks and believes that character is present in comedy rather than tragedy. If this were so, what would tragedy be but a ritual? But then, Mr. Yeats is in love with ritual and spectacle. His new book of prose—a great deal of which, by the way, has been published in his collected works—is largely a plea for ritual in literature and life. One thinks of Mr. Yeats as a theorist concerning himself with ritual rather than with the spirit of man. It is not that he is not a moralist. He is a very strict one. We doubt, however, whether his new Decalogue expresses the depth and the width of human life so passionately and so imaginatively as did the old one.

"1914."

"1914." By Field-Marshal Viscount FRENCH OF YPRES, K.P., O.M., &c. (Constable. 21s.)

THE more sensational of Lord French's disclosures and apologies have already been discounted in the discussions which arose concerning them when the chapters were appearing in the "Daily Telegraph," as a serial. Their reappearance in book-form, without explanation or modification, may be ascribed to publishing contracts; for it is surely obvious even to the most charitable reader that the author, apparently in attempting to vindicate his reputation where it had never been assailed, was, as a matter of fact, engaged in destroying it. The reason for such an act of suicide still remains conjectural. If, with its extravagant dedication to Mr. Lloyd George, it was intended to be an item in a political intrigue, that political intrigue has woefully failed. And few of those who took part in the plot to upset Mr. Asquith (which Lord French exults over as a child with a practical joke) can find any increased reputation in these memoirs which treat history, time, and place, as though they were casual marbles in a game without rules. If it was an attempt to forestall the coming life of Lord Kitchener, it would have been better both for the present dignity and future fame of the Viceroy of Ireland if his defence had been made after the attack had opened. In any case, no one alive or dead can conceivably be benefited by this revelation, given now to all the world—a distressing disclosure of a reputation which we hoped was well-founded.

One can but suppose that Lord French had really forgotten what happened at the critical occasions of which he writes: forgotten that he committed his thoughts to writing and that the writing remains in possession of its recipients. He glories in his determination to overthrow Mr. Asquith after the Newcastle speech. He recounts with pride his intrigues with the Northcliffe Press, with Mr. Lloyd George (then Mr. Asquith's colleague), Mr. Balfour, and Mr. Bonar Law: with the use of the ingenuous Captain Guest (now Mr. George's chief Whip) as intermediary. What he seems to have forgotten was that he addressed to Mr. Asquith a written communication, just about the time when it appeared that Mr. Asquith, as a matter of fact, was to remain Prime Minister. This was no superficial compliment. It represented an attempt by Lord French to convey "at this critical juncture" "what is in my inmost thoughts." "I am sure in the whole history of war"—such were the "inmost thoughts"—"no General in the field has ever been helped in a difficult task by the head of his Government, as I have been supported by your unfailing sympathy and support." For four years Mr. Asquith had been silent with this document in his possession. It was necessary for him to strike but once and to strike no more. The best that Lord French can hope for is our forgetfulness.

Again, the facts which resulted in Lord Kitchener's intervention in Paris on September 1st, 1914, were known only to a few. But they were accurately remembered by those few. They were known to every member of the Cabinet of that day. They had been disclosed by no one. Now they must of necessity be revealed. They cannot enhance Lord French's reputation as a great soldier and leader. Nobody wished for these facts to be disclosed. Lord Kitchener's intervention, backed by a unanimous Cabinet, had saved our cause from "indelible reproach." A sense of disillusionment, or even an assertion of a policy, which, as a matter of fact, would

not have been carried out, may account for a declaration which filled two Governments with "consternation." Can Lord French have actually forgotten the intention he communicated to the British Government: an intention which would have meant a disgrace worse than a disaster? If not, why does he revive memory of an incident better left undisturbed, in which he was protected in his command by the tact, firmness, and friendliness of a man, now dead, whom he attacks, and by the tolerance of a Government which recognized the immense strain of those difficult days?

But outside these sensational revelations, and even if these had been deleted, this book can do but injury to Lord French's reputation. The exceeding simplicity of these confessions is one of their outstanding features. General French was a cavalry leader, and cavalry leaders . . . but that is a point we need not labor. Yet it is doubtful if any of the "beau sabreur" type which Napoleon used so well and so well despised have ever in their memoirs presented quite such an appearance of clouded thought. He is filled with astonishment that the Germans possess such heavy artillery, and are able to bombard his men with "Jack Johnsons" and "Black Marias." After the advance to the Aisne he begins to apprehend that this is to be a war of trenches and machines, so unlike—almost unfairly unlike—the great cavalry sweeps which he had commanded in South Africa. "We had not even then" (at the Battle of the Aisne), he confesses with disarming candor, "grasped the true effect and bearing of the many new elements which had entered into the practice of modern war." "As day by day the trench fighting developed," he declares, "and unfamiliar weapons in the shape of 'trench mortars' and bombs, hand grenades, &c., began to appear on the battlefield, so day by day I began dimly to apprehend what the future might have in store for us." He calls it a "drastic process of education," although as reports came in that the enemy in front was "weakening," "the still small voice of truth and reality, trying to speak within me, remained faint and almost unheard." The "education" process continued "drastically" at the expense of human lives. The still small voice, muffled by tradition, might have saved a series of frontal attacks on trench positions which resulted in nothing but loss. "Afterwards," says Lord French, "we witnessed the stupendous efforts of de Castelnau and Foch, but all ended in the same trench! trench! trench!" What, in the name of sanity, did he expect them to end in? "Voilà un montagne" was the legend of the caricature of Buller as he butted his head into impassible hills. "Voilà un tranché" might serve as a legend for General French at Neuve Chapelle, Festubert, and Loos. Even a year after the legend had not died, for on July 1st, 1916, at the opening of the Somme, we had cavalry massed waiting to "go through": who might have stayed there, without any opportunity of "going through," for the duration of the war. Only with difficulty and in face of constant opposition was the machine permitted to replace the man on the horse and the unprotected infantry advance. We are aware, of course, that General French had nothing to do with the Somme.

But the Commander-in-Chief is always suddenly discovering the unexpected. A few days before Antwerp fell, "at the moment of which I am speaking," he declares, "and for many days afterwards, there was no serious thought or belief that Antwerp was in danger." A message to that effect on October 2nd came as a "disagreeable surprise." Why? "It is needless to say that I was perturbed on receipt of this news. It was difficult to understand why the Belgians, who had fought so well at Liège, were unable to do more in defence of a fortress which was much stronger, and situated, moreover, in a position where it could be supported by the British Fleet." Did Lord French believe that Antwerp was situated on the well-known sea coast of Bohemia? Or had the too sanguine ideas of his friend Mr. Winston Churchill, who writes to him of the "absolutely devastating support" of heavy guns from the sea, convinced him that the Fleet could distribute shells adequate for Antwerp's defence from forty miles away over Belgium, or lob them over twenty miles of Holland's neutral territory? As for the actual mad adventure of the untrained Naval Brigade, Lord French says little, in deference no doubt to the susceptibilities of his friend. But he seems not unsym-

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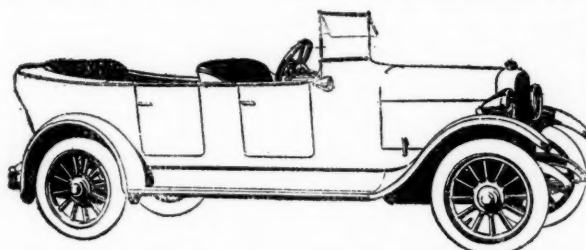
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pathetic with the verdict of President Poincaré: "He told me he thought the action of the British War Office in sending troops to Antwerp was a mistake, and expressed great surprise that the control and direction of all the British troops in France was not left entirely in the hands of one Commander-in-Chief."

Other actions appear to show extraordinarily bad Staff work, or else a want of foresight of what the other man was doing "the other side of the hill" which seems almost incredible. On the 19th October the British line was stretched in France and Flanders almost to breaking point: and there were practically no reserves available. Yet on that evening General French orders Haig and the 1st Corps to proceed northward *via* Thourout with the object of capturing Bruges and driving the Germans back to Ghent, having previously ordered Rawlinson and the 7th Division to attack Menin. Suddenly he discovers that four German corps are between Menin and Ostend. "All my worst forebodings as to the enemy's increasing strength were realized." "The strength they actually reached astounded me. This, taken with the speed in which they appeared in the field, came like a veritable bolt from the blue." *Voilà les Allemands*: actually, on Flemish soil, disputing the British race to the sea. And the result was the first Battle of Ypres, in which the 7th Division and most of the first Corps were all but destroyed.

Perhaps the most amazing plan was the one devised by General French and Mr. Churchill which never came off: for the stopping of which Lord French expresses his grievance against the British and French Governments. This was nothing less ambitious than an advance along the coast from Nieupoort to beyond Zeebrugge, to clear the Channel ports of Belgium of the enemy. It was to be performed (seemingly) by the armies which had but hardly emerged, half shattered, from the carnage of Ypres, with such territorial reinforcements as were available. It was to be performed as an overwhelming offensive attack, destined to be fiercely resisted, although the Commander-in-Chief was complaining that he could not even obtain shells and munitions adequate to the maintenance of his defensive line. It was to be an advance, in a Flemish winter, across the most difficult country in the world, full of swamps, dykes and inundations, and with a right-flank always enfiladed by unshaken German guns on the still unconquered higher ground to the eastward. But all such objections were swept away before the French-Churchill determination to do *something*, coupled with the latter's curious ideas of the power of the heavy Naval guns. "My dear friend," writes Mr. Churchill, "I do trust you will realize how damnable it will be if the enemy settles down for the winter along lines which comprise Calais, Dunkirk or Ostend." "We must have him off the Belgian Coast." "If you can gain a passage off to the left, I could give you overwhelming support from the sea." Again, "if you push your left-flank along the sand dunes of the shore to Ostend and Zeebrugge, we could give you 100 or 200 heavy guns from the sea in absolutely devastating support. For four or five miles inshore we could make you perfectly safe and superior." "There is no limit to what could be done by the extreme left-handed push and swoop along the Dutch frontier." Mr. Churchill left "promising to arrange everything with the Prime Minister and Kitchener." Alas! this bright dream of a "left-handed push and swoop" was vetoed by Governments living somewhat closer to reality: who almost brutally asserted that they did not possess the fifty newly trained territorial divisions necessary, nor the ammunition necessary, although "every effort is being made in all parts of the world to obtain an unlimited supply of ammunition"; or the co-operation and support of the French. Joffre in a final memorandum asserted that the "decisive result" to which all such secondary operations must give way could only be obtained by the "accumulation of reserves." But General French had the mortification of seeing his reserves sailing off Eastward, in conformity with a later scheme of Mr. Churchill's restless and volatile mind. In the disastrous campaign of Gallipoli Mr. Churchill had the pleasure of teaching a British Army the value of "overwhelming support from the sea" in a "push and swoop" and the possibilities of making by that support an infantry attack "perfectly safe and superior" for "four or five miles

inshore"! General French was excited to fury by the sight of the shells he so much desired hurried past his rear to Marseilles on the way to the folly (as he believed it) of the Dardanelles. The demand for 20 per cent. of his own scanty reserve to be diverted there was the last straw, which made him resolve to destroy the Government and the Prime Minister even at the risk of his own dismissal. Such a policy may have had the approval of his friend Mr. Churchill, who was visiting his headquarters at about the time this resolution was made. It did not result in the destruction of the Government or the Prime Minister. It did not result in the dismissal of Lord French. But it resulted in the dismissal from the Admiralty of his friend Mr. Churchill, with whom he had planned this amphibious attack in Flanders, and who had pushed and swooped in vain in other fields of war. Such are the vicissitudes of fortune in human affairs.

THE GERMANS IN BELGIUM.

"Belgium under German Occupation." By BRAND WHITLOCK, United-States Minister to Belgium. (Heinemann. 25s. net. Two Vols.)

Two volumes, nearly a thousand large pages, some 500,000 words: both as reviewer and as man, we opened them with a hesitating and reluctant hand. We have consulted the Kaiser's dentist; we have read the "Impressions" of David Jayne Hill, formerly American Ambassador to Berlin; we have read M. Jacques Marquis de Dampierre, and many another book dealing with the German occupation of Belgium; and we imagined that by making a mental composite photograph of the dentist, the ambassador, and the rest, we could reconstruct Mr. Whitlock's book without reading it. We were wrong. Mr. Whitlock had opportunities in Belgium of seeing and recording great events from the very inside, and he has the eye, mind and pen which enable him to take advantage of his opportunities. It says a great deal for all three, and particularly for his pen, which has been exercised in the ticklish art of novel writing, that, after four years of war and in the dark shadow of reluctant peace, we can read his 500,000 words with real interest and pleasure. Part of his success is due to the fact that, although his work is serious in the sense that he quotes chapter and verse and official documents in full, he has been wise enough to lavish on it all the arts of the novelist. He describes at length for us the inside of princely and diplomatic salons, the suns of spring and summer and the rains and winds of autumn and winter, and a nightingale singing in a Belgian garden while men and gods were preparing the Great War in Serajevo and Vienna and Berlin. Tastes differ, of course, both in literature and in medicines, but, personally, we like this kind of jam to our historical and political powders, especially when Mr. Whitlock offers to us the spoon with such ingenuous good humor. And when he comes to the events which have "made history," still with the novelist's instinct, he throws the record of his experiences into dramatic form. His book is full of admirable little sketches and pictures—of His Excellency Field-Marshal Baron von der Goltz Pasha, of General Baron von Bissing, and Mr. Hoover, and Baron von der Lancken-Wakenitz, and Cardinal Mercier—sketches and pictures which are, perhaps, just a little novelettish and journalistic, but which do succeed in making the actors on that dreary and tragic stage very vivid. Mr. Whitlock's sense of drama is his most noticeable characteristic. He gives it full play in, for instance, his descriptions of the scenes which preceded the execution of Miss Cavell. The account of the midnight visit of the Spanish Minister, the Marquis de Villalobar, Mr. Hugh Gibson, and M. De Leval, to Baron von der Lancken, and their vain attempt to have the execution postponed, is singularly exciting, and culminates in the dramatic moment when the Spanish Marquis suddenly drags the German Baron out of the room to speak to him, not as diplomatist to diplomatist, but as man to man.

That scene sums up, too, the moral of Mr. Whitlock's book. It is a book which leaves one profoundly depressed. "C'est une femme, voyons," said the Marquis to the German Baron at one moment, "vous ne pouvez pas fusiller une femme comme cela." The German Baron—the whole account and the whole book make this certain—had no desire at all to "fusiller une femme comme cela." He was "evidently

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moved." But he answered: "Messieurs, il est onze heures passées; comment faire?" "Gentlemen, it is past eleven o'clock; what can be done?" might be the motto of the Germans in Belgium. "What can be done?" when you have created a military machine which goes on working against the will and judgment of its chief engineers, and "shoots a woman like that," because it is already past eleven. It was only the Military Governor, the General von Sauberzweig, who could stop the execution, and the General was first in bed and was then "un militaire," using his "prerogative," and so the machinery ground along, as it had done at Louvain and Dinant, and Miss Cavell was shot at two in the morning. The impression which this book leaves upon us is that the individual human being, including the German, is kindly and intelligent, but that human beings and their machinery are utterly stupid and irrational. There appears to be no connection between Mr. Whitlock's experience of the German machine and Government in Belgium and his experience of German individuals in Belgium. It seems as though, if you had asked these Field-Marschals and Generals and Barons, just as if you had asked the stolid German sentinels in the Brussels streets, "Why have you come into Belgium, with your military machine and your Schrecklichkeit?" they would have had to reply: "Il est onze heures passées; comment faire?"

MR. BERTRAND RUSSELL'S POLITICS.

"Roads to Freedom: Socialism, Anarchism, and Syndicalism." By BERTRAND RUSSELL. (Allen & Unwin. 7s. 6d.)

If this book had more dead weight avoirdupois, were written by a popular publicist, and published to the beating of tom-toms, it would have been sure of receiving attention. Being the work merely of one of the best minds in Europe we have but faint hope that it will fulfil its mission of pure loving-kindness—the mission of informing correctly those who have abused him, the newspaper writers and the politicians, concerning a social portent with which each day they are compelled to deal in complete ignorance. The writings on Socialism by propagandists would fill libraries, and still they come. Those essential to an understanding of the matter could be counted upon the fingers of one hand. It can confidently be said of Mr. Russell's that it is one of the most brilliant descriptive statements of the Socialist and Anarchist philosophies that have been published in our time. Students acquainted with the work of Marx, Bakunin, Kropotkin, the Guild Socialists, and the Fabians will find nothing that is new to them, beyond the pleasure of having their principles explained and criticized by a writer of deep knowledge and imaginative sympathy. It is not a book of discovery, but of description by a master of exposition. It is not exhaustive, but it puts the inquiring on the right roads for further investigation.

Realizing, intellectually, the bankruptcy of the present ordering of affairs, and feeling, humanely, its cruelty and chaos, Mr. Russell, in exploring possibilities of social happiness, finds both in Marxian Socialism and Syndicalism systems which would give rise to a better world, but, except to view them as happier alternatives, he has no devout faith in their creeds, fearing that Marxianism would give too much power to the State, while Syndicalism, which aims, like Anarchism, at abolishing the State, would find itself forced to reconstruct a central authority in order to put an end to the rivalries of different groups. The system that commends itself to him is Guild Socialism, which he regards as conceding what is valid both in the claims of the State Socialists and in the Syndicalist fear of the State. Here we have something practicable and realizable so soon as the desire for it is general enough to carry force. Mr. Russell's free spirit is evident throughout the discussion, but its attestation is peculiarly clear in his explanation of pure Anarchism. He believes it to be the ideal to which society should continually approximate, but, after examining its possibilities, he leaves it, regretfully, it would appear, as something too far off for present human hopes. The Guild Socialists in their proposal that there should be two co-equal instruments of Government, the one geographical, representing the consumers, the other, representing the producers organized, not geographically, but in guilds, really represent, as he shows, the English love of compromise, though the unknowing think of them as extremists.

In discussing Kropotkin's hopeful analysis of the possibilities of production, Mr. Russell makes the shrewd point that the Russian thinker's proposals would hold good not only in an ideal state of Communism, but could be carried out under State Socialism, and even, in certain circumstances, in a capitalist régime. Their importance to reformers is not from the arguments they afford in favor of one economic system as against another, but because they leave hope triumphant in removing doubts which might arise of labor's productive capacity. In Mr. Russell's profound study of international relations there is a note of remorse over a golden opportunity which the world lost. "If the Russian revolution had been accompanied by a revolution in Germany, the dramatic suddenness of the change might have shaken Europe, for the moment, out of its habits of thought: the idea of fraternity might have seemed, in the twinkling of an eye, to have entered the world of practical politics; and no idea is so practical as the idea of the brotherhood of man, if only people can be startled into believing it. If only the idea of fraternity between nations were inaugurated with the faith and vigor belonging to a new revolution, all the difficulties surrounding it would melt away, for all of them are due to suspicion and the tyranny of ancient prejudice. . . . The Millennium is not for our time. The great moment has passed, and for ourselves it is again the distant hope that must inspire us, not the immediate breathless looking for the deliverance."

Now the masses of men are turning and being turned to other aims. The lucid passion of Mr. Russell's words will be heeded in saner days when we seek with hope for guidance out of the welter.

"THOU SHALT NOT KNOW . . ."

"Clarté." Par HENRI BARBUSSE. (Paris: Ernest Flammarion 4 fr. 75 c.)

CAN it have been without ironic intention that the publication in the *Populaire* of M. Henri Barbusse's new novel, "Clarté," followed immediately on that in its brother *L'Humanité* of a translation of Mr. H. G. Wells's war-novel, misentitled "Mr. Britling y voit clair"? Seeing through it was just what Mr. Britling did not do. It is what M. Barbusse's hero does, with the last lucidity. For Mr. Wells's elderly protagonist the moral of the whole thing was, "Our sons must bring us back to God." M. Barbusse's soldier, speaking as one of these sons, who has been through it (a very different process from seeing it through), rejects God, as he rejects every other sublime illusion, charity, patriotism, romantic love which help men to feel "il le faut, tu ne sauras pas":—

"Je ne vois pas Dieu. Je vois partout, partout, l'absence de Dieu. Le regard qui parcourt l'espace revient, abandonné. Et je ne l'ai jamais vu, et il est nulle part, nulle part, nulle part. . . . L'absence de Dieu entoure infiniment et comme réellement chaque suppliant agenouillé, assoiffé de quelque humble miracle personnel, et chaque chercheur accoudé sur ses papiers, à l'affût des preuves comme un créateur, et l'antagonisme haineux, énorme et sanglant de toutes les religions armées les unes contre les autres. L'absence de Dieu surmonte comme le ciel les conflits angoissants du bien et du mal, et l'attention palpitante des justes, et l'immensité, qui me hante, des cimetières d'agonies, et le charnier des soldats innocents, et les cris pesants des naufragés.

As he lies, wounded and, as he thinks, dying on the battlefield, it is this "tu ne sauras pas" which sounds in his ears. Thinking the thoughts, moved by the will of others, men live between hope and regret, always in the past or in the future, never in the present, isolated, though together they could do anything, ignorant of truth, ignorant above all of their common humanity, of the fact of resemblance, so much more significant than that of difference. They say to themselves, "There are others;" but it is only a phrase: they go out to kill these others without knowing what they do, without knowing what they themselves are.

As a novel "Clarté" is even more remarkable than "Le Feu," because in it M. Barbusse has faced and met the supreme difficulty of connecting the war with life before and after it: has grappled with the fearful question of responsibility—real responsibility, whose face is turned to the future as well as to the past. For most of us the war exists in a hideous and tragic disconnection—as a thing apart, cutting life in two—and, however unconsciously, we are busy

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in making the separation as sharp as we can. There is life before the war, and life after it, occupied in blotting out the thing between. The men who have been out into the darkness come back with a secret, awful knowledge that they do not, cannot, communicate. "Le Feu" gave us a glimpse of the shape and horror of that darkness, in a form more terrible than Latzko's "Men in Battle" because of the cold sanity of its accent: but it left it a separate thing. We were forced to realize that men—not soldiers, men—were suffering these things, but we stared at them across a gulf.

In "Clarté" it is no longer separate. We see it growing out of the daily life of Europe, bone of its bone, flesh of its flesh: more dreadful, we see it preparing to go on, fed by all the ignorance, the illusions, the romantic beliefs, the happily accepted cruelties of normal experience, till it consummates the final destruction of humanity itself. Only human thought can end war: and human thought remains unchanged. It gave birth to this war: it will give birth to others, unless we let ourselves know, unless we accept that clarity which M. Barbusse's hero at last achieves. It is a clarity particular as well as universal: it penetrates the relations of men and women, as well as the relations of nations, and sees the false romanticism, disguising the animal in glorious masquerade, that brings ruin on both.

M. Barbusse begins by setting before us, with a dryness that, until we see its value in retrospect, is almost dull, the life of a quite normal man. Simon Paulin is a trusted and responsible clerical employé in a big petrol works at Verviers, full of black-coated snobbishness, looking up to his superiors in rank and wealth, and down, with a contempt mingled with disquiet, on the workmen. His life is safe, monotonous, diversified only by sexual relations before and after marriage which absorb him in perpetually renewed, perpetually frustrated, illusions of transcendent felicity. The persons of the small town in which he lives, first with a devoted but very trying aunt, afterwards with his wife, Marie (with whom he is, for a time, passionately in love, as she with him), are slightly sketched, as are the various tradesmen and other solid citizens, the big people to whom they look up, the ardent followers of Déroulède, a drunken Socialist blacksmith, poor little Antoinette, gradually growing blind from neglect, and so on. The even tenor of the life of the place is ruffled by such events as a big strike, which fills Simon with a vague dread of the mob: the autumn manoeuvres in 1913, and a fashionable hunting party attended by a prince who remarks that the chase is really better than a review—"parce qu'il y a du sang." Then comes the war.

Simon, like all the other separate men, sinks into uniformity. His past, his individuality vanishes; in barracks and later at the front he becomes one of a mass with whom he is united only to be more completely separated from them, driven hither and thither without will or understanding: a creature which endures, sleeps, wakes again to endure and sleep, bereft of any faculty to protest, to escape, to refuse. Crushed beneath the weight of his accoutrements, he marches till he feels he must drop down, unable to bear more, and goes on, because all round him there are other men who, like him, go on, because to go on is easier than to stop. He reaches the trenches, sees that vast and awful plain, like nothing human, which appears to be the end of the world (everyone who has read "Le Feu" knows how M. Barbusse can describe its obscene desolation), and there in the mud, the wet, among sights and sounds and smells outside all credible experience, accepted because unrelatable to it, and because, again, there is nothing else to do but to accept, he endures. His comrades in misery are friendly enough, but he to them, as they to him, is "no more than any other." Marcassin, their sergeant, is ablaze with patriotic ardor, but he cannot communicate his flame any more than Termitte, the internationalist, can rouse anyone to a discussion of militarism.

"Le militarisme français et le militarisme prussien ce n'est pas la même chose, puisque l'un est français et l'autre prussien," says Marcassin: and there the argument drops. No one argues about the war, or about anything: they are all absorbed in the huge fact of unendurable discomfort and the effort to secure such slight alleviations as are possible. An advance, a retreat, an attack, and a counter-attack are described with an epic sweep of formless misery that recalls "La Débâcle." In the counter-attack Simon kills

a German and is himself severely wounded by a shell. Lying on the ground he sees beside him the German dying, and after a time, believes that he himself has died. There rises before him a vision, followed by a long period of strangely lucid mental wandering, which would be marvellous simply as a transcript of the movements of a mind under an anæsthetic if it were not, in itself, so movingly beautiful that one has not time for such wonder. For in it the human spirit rises to face the hideous fact of war, and to ask itself what and why this is. And as it asks it sees that war is only one aspect of the whole: is vitally and inextricably connected with our social system.

"Soldat universel, homme pris au hasard parmi les hommes, rappelle-toi: il n'y a pas un moment où tu fus toi-même. Jamais tu ne cessas d'être courbé sous l'âpre commandement sans réplique:—'Il le faut, il le faut!' Ensermé pendant la paix dans la loi du travail incessant, dans l'usine de machines ou dans l'usine de bureaux, esclave de l'outil, de la plume ou du talent ou d'autre chose, tu fus traqué sans répit, du matin au soir, par la tâche quotidienne qui ne te permettait que de vaincre tout juste la vie et de ne te reposer qu'en rêve."

From this vision Simon awakes to find himself in hospital. Marie, his wife, comes to see him. After some weeks she takes him home, *réformé*, physically broken, useless as a soldier. But of physical suffering M. Barbusse nowhere says much. His stress is on the mind. The rest of his story is occupied in showing how Simon gradually makes clear to himself and to Marie, where they are.

He takes up his life, where he left it off, in a world unchanged save that his eyes are opened to it. Life, as it was before, resumes: the war goes on. The people of Verviers have undergone no change. The tradesmen are busy profiteering: the parsons preaching of the purifying, ennobling, and unifying effect of war: the women are some in a state of "misère heureuse," others, like Madame Marcassin, stupified by grief. Simon goes to a Fête du Souvenir, and to the War Museum, and finds ignorance, hatred and illusion as busy as before: everyone, *au fond*, preparing to go on as they did before. And that, as he knows, means going on to more war. For war is rooted in the existing order, and the injustice and lies on which it is based. Only the power of thought, the will to truth, can break that order, rooted as it is in the illusions, the subtrefuges, the refusal to know, by which men have lived hitherto.

To see M. Barbusse's defects as a novelist is easy. He has not, to any high degree, the power of objectifying different personalities. Simon, Marie are types: they are hardly individuals. Especially in the latter part of "Clarté," Simon's reflections belong rather to M. Barbusse than to himself. Yet in the given case this hardly matters. The hero of "Clarté" is suffering humanity and its voice comes to us through its pages with a profound and penetrating beauty and a candour that pierces the very soul.

"Nous sommes à un grand soir du monde. Il s'agit de savoir si nous réveillerons demain. Nous n'avons qu'un secours; nous savons, nous, de quoi la nuit est faite."

M. Barbusse has done his share in breaking down and through the silence and ignorance which kept us imprisoned behind the iron shutter—"Thou shall not know." And the light which comes to us from his book has its own strange and terrible beauty: the beauty of a work of art.

The Week in the City.

DURING the week people in the City have been, as the City Editors say, "awaiting developments," and meanwhile the jobbers have employed themselves in marking down railway preference and debenture stocks as a consequence of the new Loan. On Wednesday Consols fell below 53. But French loans were maintained, the Fives at 79½, the Fours at 64½. There is admittedly very little enthusiasm for the new Loan, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer is hearing from all sides that those who have money are finding all sorts of excuses. First of all, they say they want it for their own business. Secondly, there are bitter complaints at the Government extravagance and waste, as well as about the new wars and costly expeditions in which Mr. Churchill is engaging British forces. On the other hand, it is recognized that, in order to check the inflation, it is most important that the great mass of floating debt should be funded, but everyone wants peace to be secured.

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